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STORIES OF A BRIDE.

VOL. I.

In the Press,

WEDDED LIFE IN THE UPPER RANKS.

3 Vols. Post 8vo.

STORIES
OF
A BRIDE;

BY
THE AUTHOR OF THE MUMMY.

" I have no hope that does not dream for thee ;
I have no joy that is not shared by thee.
All that I once took pleasure in--my lute
Is only sweet when it repeats thy name.
My flowers, I only gather them for thee ;
The book drops listless down, I cannot read,
Unless to thee." MISS LONDON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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VOL. 1.

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STORIES OF A BRIDE.

THE BRIDE.

She was a paragon ; her beauties such
As love to bask upon the poet's page ;
The starry lustre of her speaking eyes,
Her brow, her hair of hyacinthine bloom,
And neck of swan-like grace ; all seemed divine ;
When with the lightness of a cloud she walked
Her chamber, or amid the ball-room blazed.

ROBERT MONTGOMERY.

I WAS born with three claims to admiration. Nature gave me beauty ; education a certain smartness, which in me passed for wit ; and fortune made me an heiress : the last qualification undoubtedly setting off the two first, as it must be confessed, that even a diamond looks much better when handsomely set, than when just taken from the mine ; yet with all these advan-

tages, both natural and acquired, I have never long been quite happy; I have always felt a vacuum, a *tedium vitæ*, a want of something piquant to give flavour to the dull realities of life, a *je ne sais quoi* which cannot be expressed, and which yet is perfectly comprehensible. There must be a fault somewhere, and to endeavour to find it out, I will relate my history.

My father was a man of large fortune, and I was his only child: my mother died giving me birth; and my father, in a transport of despair, vowed to devote his future life entirely to the care of my education.

“Dear relic of my departed Emily!” exclaimed he, apostrophizing me as I lay in my nurse’s arms, when I had the honour of making my first appearance in his presence, “no after cares shall ever divert *my* mind from the pleasing task of imparting the rudiments of instruction unto *thine*. From this moment I forswear the world; I will retire to the country, and there, secluded from society, my whole time shall be devoted to the delightful employment of training thy infant steps to virtue. No hireling go-

verness shall interfere in this sacred duty, and on me alone shall devolve the great, the important charge."

My father was an enthusiast in every thing, and rapid in all he said or did. His favourite axiom was, that only the shortest possible time should elapse between the conception of a great design and its execution; and, unlike axiomists in general, he practised what he taught; accordingly, the moment that he had determined to retire from society, in order to devote himself to me, he gave orders for the breaking up of his town establishment, and would have commenced my education *tout de suite*, had not my nurse respectfully hinted, that I was only a few days old, and that it was not customary to teach babies any science till they could speak. The funeral of my mother, and the necessity of erecting an elegant monument to her memory, luckily seconded this wise suggestion; and my father's mind was soon too fully occupied in discussing the comparative merits of Gothic and Grecian architecture, to allow him to waste a single thought on me. Whilst he was meditating on

temples and urns, and perplexing himself with every possible order of columns, all was well; but, unfortunately, buildings cannot be in progress for ever, and the mausoleum was finished before my reasoning faculties were sufficiently developed to enable me to receive instruction. Consequently, when my father, with a constancy of purpose very unusual to him, sent for me into his library to commence my education, about twelve months after my mother's death, he found me so stupid that he gave up the task in despair.

“It is very strange,” said he, as he rang for my nurse, and I made my exit in a violent fit of crying, “that the passions begin to develop themselves so much sooner than the understanding. Incipient vanity sparkled in the eyes of that little creature when I showed her my watch, and anger now swells in her youthful bosom, yet her mind is a perfect blank.” My father paused, and fell into a fit of musing, from which he only roused himself to take down and examine the different authors who have written upon the developement of the human mind; unfortunately their theories did not correspond with his expe-

rience; and, after a fruitless study of some hours, he threw them aside, and employed himself in sketching out a plan for my education.

Nothing could be more perfect than this syllogistical synopsis, as he termed it. I was to unite the knowledge and intellect of the one sex, with the softness and fascination of the other. I was to be learned without pedantry, accomplished without vanity, and witty without affectation; in short, as there is no telling half what I was to have been, it will be quite enough if I can contrive to say what I was.

When the plan for my education was quite completed; when it had been read, and re-read, and received sundry revisions and corrections, my father was at a loss for something fresh to do: his mind was too active to remain unemployed, and after his public and eclatant renunciation of the pleasures of society, it would have been very awkward to return to them so soon. An entire devotion to books is only suited to a passive disposition, and my father wanted to have his energies excited. After much meditation, he determined to turn farmer, and certainly

found in that employment not the least paucity of excitement. My father's ideas were always grand; indeed, they were generally so far too big for the head which was to hold them, as to be quite unmanageable; accordingly, when he turned agriculturist, experimentalist, and improver, it was upon a large scale. He took thousands of the best acres of his estate into his own hands, and supported whole armies of labourers. He tried every kind of known invention, and when these were exhausted, fancied new ones; thus banishing ennui; as he always thought himself upon the very point of realizing immense wealth by his discoveries, only, unluckily, like the credulous alchymist of antiquity, he found that his riches remained always "upon the very verge of projection," but never advanced any farther; still, however, in the genuine spirit of his class, he was not discouraged, but went plotting on.

In the mean time I was quite forgotten. My father had accustomed himself to look too far abroad to be able to contract his sphere of vision, so as to see what was passing at home:

and whilst he was maturing a plan for the introduction of cucumbers into Spitzbergen, and field warming-pans into Worcestershire, I was suffered to run wild about the house, and do whatever I pleased, as no one dared to contradict me. I thus grew up in beautiful simplicity, associating with no companion but a great Newfoundland dog; and instead of being a model of perfection in all accomplishments, I was in imminent danger of reaching maturity without knowing my alphabet, had not the good old housekeeper, when I had attained my tenth year, declared it was a sin and shame to bring up a Christian child like a savage, and heroically devoted herself to the herculean tasks of teaching me to read a chapter in the Bible, and to hem a pocket handkerchief.

At this interesting period, a visit from my father's sister, Lady Arlington, formed a new epoch in my life. She had resided many years at Vienna, her husband having filled a diplomatic situation at that court. He was now dead, and she had returned to England a rich and childless widow, determined to adopt, if possible,

the daughter of her only brother. She had never seen me, but she had heard that I had been brought up in the country, and as she knew nothing of rural life but from books, she had painted to herself a blooming innocent, lovely, though unadorned; graceful, though untaught; who possessed a mind so naturally disposed to elegant refinement, as to kindle immediately from the Promethean torch of her manners, and who only had occasion to be seen to be admired. With these impressions it may be easily supposed that she was exceedingly anxious for me to make my appearance in her presence, and when I did—*ah dio!* what an impression I made! I knew too little of the forms of society, and was too much accustomed to consider myself a person of importance to feel afraid of any one, so the moment I heard that my aunt was arrived, I rushed into the room to embrace her, with earth-soiled hands, streaming hair, torn frock, and dirty face. Lady Arlington screamed, and shrank back in affright. “*Mon Dieu!*” cried she, “is it possible that

this creature can be my niece ! *Quelle bête ! absolument elle a l'air sauvage !*”

Even my father looked at me with astonishment. “ This is the fault of her nurse,” said he ; “ the child was no doubt impatient to see you ; but they should not have suffered her to appear thus. Come hither, Emily, you alarm your aunt.”

I obeyed in silence, for, young as I was, my vanity was excessively mortified by my aunt's manner, and I could not comprehend how I could be an object of disgust to any one. Lady Arlington bedewed her handkerchief with eau de Cologne, and applied it incessantly to her face. My father was vexed ; “ You know Emily has been brought up in retirement,” said he, in an extenuating tone, “ and it is hardly fair to expect her manners to be perfectly polished.”

“ I did not expect her to be polished, but I could not fancy her thus. The child is a perfect monster. Look how she stands ; she will certainly grow awry.”

“ It is not surprising that she is deficient in external graces, or she has been only under my

care, and men cannot attend to trifles. You know that I have devoted myself to her education; indeed, I believe that I sent you, some time since, a copy of my plan; it is really so excellent that I mean to put it in execution immediately, and as the child's mind polishes, her body will gradually acquire grace."

"But it is ten years since you sent me that plan; and you own that your daughter's education is yet in embryo. It must be confessed that though your designs be excellent, they take a long time to carry them into execution. However it is too late to repent, and we must endeavour to remedy her awkwardness in town; she must have lessons in calisthenics immediately."

During this conversation I had looked alternately at the speakers, indescribably hurt to discover the mean opinion they seemed both to entertain of my acquirements, which a pause at length gave me an opportunity to display. "*I can read,*" said I sullenly.

My aunt smiled, and my father looked aghast. I thought they still doubted my powers, and pulling an old dirty, and torn spelling-book from my

pocket, I began to murder some verses of the Psalms with a nasal drawl and provincial intonation, which seemed absolutely to paralyze my father, whose ear was nice even to fastidiousness, but which made my aunt laugh immoderately. "I congratulate you most sincerely," said she, addressing her brother, "on the promising fruit of your cares. *En vérité, la petite a l'air mignonne !*"

My father was horror-struck.

"How is this?" exclaimed he, ringing the bell so vehemently, that a servant appeared instantaneously. "Who has dared to teach my child this vile jargon?"

"Lord, sir, Miss is only reading the Psalms."

"Who has taught her, I say?" stamping.

"Mrs. Stevens."

"Send her to me instantly."

The old butler disappeared, and would have taken me with him, but my father grasped my arm, and would not permit me to stir. Stevens soon obeyed the summons.

"How dared you presume to attempt to instruct your young lady."

“Lord, sir,” falling upon her knees, “pray forgive me, Miss was growing up worse nor an heathen.”

“Come come, brother,” said Lady Arlington, “this poor, simple old woman meant no harm. In fact she has done *her* duty better than you have *yours*. I thought your foolish speculations had only injured your fortune; but I am shocked to find that, had it not been for my opportune arrival, they would have occasioned the ruin of my poor niece. Give her up now entirely to my care, and confess that you were not equal to the task you had so rashly undertaken.”

“You are quite mistaken in your opinion of my plans. Success is not always the test of merit, and though some of my agricultural speculations have not been *completely* fortunate, it does not follow that all will be equally unlucky. The man who makes two blades of grass spring where one only grew before, is undoubtedly the noblest benefactor to his country.”

“Even if he neglect his only child?”

“You do not see the thing in its right light.

Women are never capable of taking enlarged views of a subject ; besides, Emily was not forgotten ; it is true that her education was not yet begun, but I had laid down a plan, and if she had had patience to wait a little longer—”

“ Really the precocity of her genius was very provoking ; for if she had waited, probably, judging by the haste you have already displayed, she might have learnt her alphabet in the course of the next thirty years.”

“ Well, it is useless to recriminate ; you shall take the child, and we shall see how she will improve under your care.”

In consequence of this half ungracious permission, it was ordered that I should be washed and dressed, and my clothes packed up, in order that I might accompany my aunt back to town. My heart was nearly broken at this intimation ; I had taken a violent dislike to Lady Arlington, and I was very sorry to leave my Newfoundland dog and little Martha, the infant daughter of a deceased servant, who had been taken into the Castle to be my plaything, and of whom I was excessively fond. My aunt, when informed of

my grief, would willingly have pacified me by permitting me to take my favourites with me, but a great Newfoundland dog and a servant's child of two years old would have been such atrocities in the town establishment of a woman of fashion, that I was reluctantly compelled to submit.

"I am afraid the child will be very plain, Harris," said my aunt to her favourite soubrette, when I was brought before her, prepared for my journey.

"Oh, my lady, she is such a Goth at present," replied the travelling waiting maid; "but in town, under able tuition, and with your ladyship's example before her eyes, and your ladyship's manners to copy—"

"You think she may become tolerable," said her ladyship, smiling; "but she is so fat, and has such a complexion; ough! she is really hideous."

"A vapour bath, my lady, constant medical regimen, and assiduous cares, will do much; especially as Nature has given her fine eyes."

"And that is almost the only thing that art

cannot give," said the lady, sighing; then calling me to her, she examined my features attentively, pronouncing them better than she had supposed, and praising my long eye-lashes so extravagantly, that I felt already more than half reconciled to my fate, and I departed from my paternal home, if not with pleasure, at least with resignation.

On my arrival in town, where, I may observe, *en passant*, that I was surprised at all I heard and all I saw, I was placed under the care of a French governess, who was strictly enjoined not to let me speak a single word of English, to make me abhor vulgarity, and to watch incessantly over my manners. I believe no other directions were thought necessary, as, indeed, these points comprehend all that French governesses are ever expected to perform. Masters, however, of every description were engaged to supply the deficiency, and my education was regularly commenced, according to the rules of *bon ton*.

I do not pretend to remember the names of half the things I was taught; for one science followed another in such quick succession, that a

jumble of hard words was all I ever knew of any of them. Nature had given me a good ear, and I easily became a proficient in music and dancing. I also learnt to speak French and Italian passably; but there I stopped. My genius had exhausted itself, and all the rest was—blank. My manners, however, had become polished, and my person graceful; my superabundant flush had vanished; my complexion had grown clear, and my features *comme il faut*; in short, in four years my aunt expressed herself satisfied, and presented me in triumph to my father, who, about that period, having succeeded to an earldom by the death of a distant relation, came up to town to take the oaths and his seat as a member of the British Senate.

My aunt was delighted at this new dignity, and the accession of wealth which attended it was exceedingly acceptable to my father, as he was just then beginning to discover that speculating is a very expensive amusement. He was pleased with my appearance and manners; but when he heard me speak, he found fault with my French accent.

“ I would venture a thousand pounds,” said he, “ that the girl does not read English better than she did before she left home, notwithstanding her accomplishments.”

Nothing could exceed my aunt’s indignation at such a supposition, and, after discussing the point with much warmth, she desired me to declaim some verses which had been just sent her by a patron-seeking poet, to convince my father of his mistake. I began :

“ Now clouds, and all the gloomy train of night give way,
And Sol’s āpṣ̄earānce heralds in the day.”

“ ṽ Appēarānce,” observed my aunt, in an audible whisper. I went on :

“ With pērsēvērānce now I climb the hill.”

My father laughed, and my aunt, mortified at the success of his expedient, dismissed my French governess, and took an English one; under whose care, by diligent attention, I learnt in time to pronounce my native language so as to be understood. The next two years of my existence were perfectly wretched. I was too old to be a child, and not old enough to be a woman. If I wanted any dress which particularly pleased

my fancy, or if I wished to go to a concert, ball, or opera, I was told that I must wait till I was "out;" or if I objected to be trotted into the dining-room at dessert, still, till I was "out," the case was *sans remède*. In fact, this coming out seemed like getting into heaven out of purgatory, and I panted for it accordingly. I do not know exactly what I expected; but it was something gay, brilliant, and delightful, and quite different from any thing that I had ever experienced before, which last perfection was, I believe, to say truth, its greatest charm. It is not surprising that I longed for change, as the life of a young lady educated at home is certainly the most monotonous that can be imagined; particularly if she has no sisters, and is nearly approaching the moment of emancipation. But if my sufferings were great during this period, they were nothing compared to those of my unfortunate governess. Poor creature! shut up all day in our dull school-room, looking only on a dead wall, and secluded from all society but mine; her only hope of change was going to church on a Sunday, and her only relaxation a walk

round the garden in the centre of the square in which we resided ; a promenade only equalled in elegance and variety, by that of a squirrel running round the wheel of his cage. If the doctrine of transmigration be true, and we do penance in one state of existence for the sins which we have committed in another, what wicked creatures governesses must have been ! Even worse than the souls shut up in hackney-coach horses.

At sixteen I was presented, and of course was instantly surrounded by crowds of adorers, who were lavish in praise of my beauty, my talents, my wit, in short every thing but my fortune ; which, being a thing of no consideration in the eyes of necessitous young men of fashion, no doubt entirely escaped their notice. As I was an heiress, and consequently did not want to marry for an establishment ; and, as romance did not happen to be in fashion, I had no temptation to fall in love ; the ordinary provocation of acting against the will of cross relations was also wanting ; for my father and aunt, who were both a thousand times more romantic than myself, seemed to expect, as I was rich, that, as a

matter of course I must fix my affections upon some one who was poor. My aunt actually seemed almost disappointed when she found that I overlooked all the handsome youths of slender expectations who presented themselves before me, and that I liked myself too well to think much of any one else.

My father, indeed, had no leisure to bestow many thoughts upon me; for his ardent mind was now entirely engrossed by a new subject. He had made a speech soon after taking his seat in the House of Lords, which had been warmly applauded, and he now thought of nothing but politics. No persuasions could induce him to relinquish a debate; he spoke on every question, and voted in every division. No one exceeded him in patriotism, though I really forget whether he was a whig or a tory; and in the days I speak of, there was some difference between them. I only know that his speeches were generally two hours long, and that upon important occasions, he used to send for me into the library, that I might hear him rehearse. Hours of penance! how I used to

rejoice when ye were over; yet I loved my father, but unfortunately I had no genius for politics, and did not like long speeches.

I had a large fortune from my mother; and as every one knew that if my father did not marry again, a circumstance that seemed by no means probable, I should in due time become Countess of Montessor, in my own right, with all the funds, lands, and tenements, thereunto belonging, I had innumerable offers, more, I verily believe, than the once celebrated Harriet Byron, though I certainly could not boast that I possessed half the charms of that paragon of perfection. No Sir Charles Grandison, however, “bowed upon my hand;” and no one certainly ever ran away with me. Lovers take things more quietly now than they did fifty years ago. I am sure I do not know why, though, I dare say, ingenious hands might trace the cause to the National Debt, the Court of Chancery, or the Catholic Question; for I remember, during my political studies, that they seemed the roots of all evil.

None of my lovers, luckily, being desperate,

I enjoyed, in their fullest extent, those halcyon days of woman's life, when all appears *en couleur de rose* ; when beauty is in its brightest bloom, and admiration gives animation to society, till suddenly my happiness received a severe shock from the death of my father. He caught cold while waiting in the lobby for his carriage, after speaking with tremendous energy in the senate. "Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori," said a brother peer a few nights after his death, having contrived, with statesman-like skill, to introduce a funeral oration on his friend into a debate on Catholic emancipation. "He died on the field of his glory," observed another. Many shook their heads, some sighed, more admired the eloquence of the orators who lamented his loss, and after that my father was forgotten. Though I had never seen much of him, I was inconsolable at his death, till my aunt, to divert my grief, and, *entre nous*, to amuse herself during her season of seclusion, proposed a journey to the Continent. I gladly gave my consent, and we departed, leaving my numerous adorers to fall in love with the next rich beauty that

might happen to make her appearance in the beau monde.

Our route to Paris was excessively uninteresting. We did not meet with a single adventure all the way. The sea was calm, the roads good, and even the custom-house officers provokingly civil. I do not think our courier had one quarrel with the postilions, and we had been too long used to the streets of London to grumble much at the pavé. Excepting, indeed, that I liked the carillions at Calais, and did not like the uncarpeted floors; that I thought the towns dirty and old fashioned; and was disappointed to find that the vines (which my imagination had invested with the height and elegance of the hop) looked like stunted gooseberry bushes, I might just as well have staid at home. The road between Calais and Paris is indisputably monotonous and bare; though, indeed, as somebody says, it only wants wood, water, hills, and gentlemen's houses, to make it picturesque and charming!

Paris *was* enchanting, it was before it had been punished for the sins of its Emperor;

when the Louvre scorned the monstrous beauties of Rubens, and the miracles of St. Bruno ; and when the Venetian horses looked proudly down upon the palace of the Tuilleries. Paris was *then* gay ; the spirits of its people were not broken, and they flattered themselves that though, *par hazard*, the allied troops had entered Paris, France was still the mistress of the world.

“ When ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise,”

and I suspect that the Parisians have not improved in happiness since they have discovered their mistake.

Having kissed the gouty hands of Louis le Desiré, wondered at the vastness of his legs, and visited all the other lions of the metropolis, we plunged into *les delices* of Parisian society, which I found infinitely more agreeable than that of London ; as in France, people meet to talk, not to eat ; and even a Parisian shopkeeper, I believe, seldom entertains his friends with any thing more substantial than iced *eau de groiselles*, and *les plasirs des dames*. The report of my fortune attracted lovers in abundance : half the young nobility of the kingdom

threw themselves at my feet, declaring their determination of expiring if I frowned; though many, when they found me unpersuadable, prudently changed their minds, and transferred their devoirs to my aunt, as she had a good jointure, and Frenchmen are not very particular. We were, however, both inexorable. The Frenchmen were astonished; they were perfectly convinced that in England we could never have seen any thing equal to themselves, and they could not account for our insensibility.

“*Mon Dieu!*” said a savant, “I am now not much surprised that the English ladies defy the dangers of travelling: for, as they are evidently of the class of cold-blooded animals, they may possibly be able to re-produce an arm or leg at pleasure, if they should happen to be deprived of one by accident!”

If a woman ever existed who had reached maturity without displaying an inclination for dress, the Rue Vivienne is certainly calculated to call forth the dormant passion. I had always a taste for that most pleasing science, and nothing could be more *recherché* than my cos-

tume. My maid Smith, for I did not dare to trust so important a charge as that of decorating my person into common hands, had regularly taken her degrees under a celebrated English *marchande de modes*—but even she was struck with admiration at the superior gusto of the French. A nation, indeed, who have books directing the exact method of arranging a *papillote*, and treatises on the due fall of plaits, ought to excel in adorning the person. Nothing can be done well without study, and dress requires more than any thing else. The materials of which clothes are composed are of little consequence; it is the manner in which they fit, and the *tournure* of the wearer, that gives the air *distingué*. I have seen a French belle look more fashionable in a common coloured English muslin, and a plain net mob-cap and quilling, than an English woman in a white satin wrapping gown, trimmed with swansdown, and a cap loaded with the most costly lace. Style is every thing; it is the soul of the toilette; and alas! how different is the toilette of a *belle Francaise*, animated by that soul, to that of a quiet Englishwoman

without it? Grace lurks about the first; her glass, her trinkets, her dressing-case, her *parure* and her *vide-bourse*, have all the stamp of elegance. Some pretty little moral device appears in every trifle; sometimes an elegant gilt Cupid is trampling upon a mother-of-pearl Time, to show how love can wile away the hours; in others, Cupid is himself a prisoner, and is lying gasping at the feet of Hymen; or occasionally the little urchin is flying away from the tremendous visage of Minerva; who, armed with a stupendous buckler and helmet (emblems, I suppose, of her learning), has almost frightened the sportive deity into fits.

French women certainly think a good deal of effect. I believe if a house full of them were to be on fire, they would all throw themselves into elegant attitudes before they called for assistance; and I have been told, that a disconsolate widow, whose grief over the tomb of her husband in the Pere la Chaise, used to be the admiration of all Paris, was accustomed to practise daily her exclamations of despair before a large looking-glass!

Whilst I was in Paris I took a fancy to a lap-dog; for no lady was then seen in public without a long piece of ribbon in her hand, the farther extremity of which was attached to the collar of either a French poodle, or an Italian greyhound. I could not live out of the fashion, so I had a dog and a ribbon immediately. Pink was the prevailing colour, as all bluish tints were thought approximating to violet, and were accordingly stigmatised as disloyal. I was a staunch royalist, and of course my ribbon glowed with the excess of my loyalty almost to a deep scarlet. I soon however grew tired of my dog, who had several *not winning ways*, and I sent him to finish his education *en pension* to the Pont Neuf. I then patronised a parrot, but I found its noise so intolerable, that it soon followed the lap-dog. My next pet was a young Frenchman; for having become accustomed to have a favourite, I could not do without one, and M. Gaultier supplied admirably the place of my departed *Souris* and *Coquette*.

M. Gaultier was very handsome, and very naïve. He pretended to wish to learn English,

and I undertook to teach him. Since the days of Abelard and Eloisa, every body knows what danger lurks in such a situation. I was beginning to find my pupil *bien interessant*, to be anxious for his coming, and to wonder at his absence, when my aunt, whose romance did not extend further than the younger sons of the English nobility, and who had no idea of marrying me to a necessitous French captain, cruelly interrupted our studies, and hurried me off to Vienna.

I did not much like Vienna, when I first arrived there. I think it ought to be called the city of the winds; for even the Lapland witches could not boast of greater variety. My French valet declared that they blew from all quarters at once; but this was giving too favourable a description of them, as in that case the unhappy pedestrians would have had some chance of being kept steady by the conflicting currents, instead of being hurried along like ships in full sail, as I have often seen them.

“I am surprised you do not admire Vienna,

Emily ;” said my aunt, “ what can be your objection to so fine a city ? ”

“ I do not like the wind ! ”

“ Nothing can be more healthy than a fine fresh breeze ! ”

“ The clouds of sand from the suburbs — ”

“ Look like showers of pulverized silver ! ”

“ Those same suburbs in wet weather ! ”

“ Mud is much better and cooler for the horses’ feet than stones, and you know I am careful of my cattle.”

“ I abominate the narrow streets, and the lofty houses, which bend towards each other at the top, as though they were going to embrace, and shut out every particle of sun and air.”

“ They keep the streets cool, and garrets are much more wholesome for the poor than cellars.”

“ Then there is the vile pavement, and the mass of carriages, with all the *et ceteras*, which make driving in Vienna quite a distinct branch of the science of Jehuism.”

“ Excess of population ; an opportunity of showing skill.”

In short, my aunt and I were both prejudiced; she could see no faults in her favourite city, and I no perfections. Perhaps I thought of M. Gaultier; a circumstance very likely, though it was full three months since I had seen him, as I had as yet, found no new beau to flirt with; for all the men worth thinking of were gone with the allied Sovereigns to England. This made Vienna very dull. There were also no morning calls, and though the houses were open in an evening, for any one to go who might feel inclined, after having been once properly introduced, which was pleasant enough, the dinner parties were horrid. They ate at the most gothic hours, and their cookery was abominable. I am no *gourmande*, but it was impossible to have lived in Paris without learning something of the science *de la cuisine*, and without being aware that the first morsel is better than the second, and that all exquisite flavour is gone after the third.

The grand art of cookery is indeed the exquisite harmony of the whole; nothing should predominate, and yet every ingredient should

contribute to the general flavour ; whilst the very instant you discover even a grain of pepper too much or too little in a ragout, the cook ought directly to be put on a *cours de regime*. The Germans know nothing of this refined gusto. I verily believe the wretches eat only to satisfy their appetites, a feat which I may observe *en passant* is not very easy to be accomplished, and they delight chiefly in animal food, of which the consumption in Vienna is greater than in any other city of the same size in the known world.

As in France, people meet to talk, not to eat ; so in Germany they meet to eat, not to talk ; and their taste in the choice of their viands somewhat resembles that of the farmer, who wishing to give an elegant supper, had an enormous boiled leg of pork at the top of his table, and a couple of roast geese at the bottom !

Nobody walks at Vienna, excepting the veriest canaille ; indeed such are the evils of pedestrianism in those crowded, cold, dusty, windy streets, that they must be mad who would walk, if they could possibly afford to ride. Vienna is not

a cheerful looking city. Many of the magasins have an odd kind of glazed pattern card stuck against their walls, instead of a regular shop. The mansions of the gens *comme il faut*, have the air of prisons, and the whole city at a little distance, looks like a great sugar loaf, the spire of St. Stephen's cathedral forming the top. The grand amusement of the noblesse is to drive up and down the Prater; whilst the good citizens sit enjoying themselves amongst the trees; and the young noblemen ride along the side alleys, displaying their fine horses, and their spirit, if they chance to have any. Both male and female exhibitors delight in fine clothes, particularly the Hungarians and Bohemians; in short the Emperor was the only ill-dressed person I ever saw upon the Prater.

The suburbs are separated from the citadel by a kind of park, planted with trees, which forms a verdant belt round the city. A number of people are generally sitting under these trees, the women knitting, and the men smoking; both being incessantly and indefatigably employed in their several vocations.

It is said that the women go to bed knitting; and however, be this as it may, they certainly never cease whilst they are up. I have seen an old print, purporting to represent woman's tattle, which paints them talking in all possible situations. Had the artist been a German, he would certainly have drawn his fair ones knitting. Not only stockings, but gloves, shawls, caps, gowns, and mantles, emanate from their ever-moving pins; they knit jackets for their husbands; trowsers for their sons, and petticoats for themselves. "The force of *knitting* can no farther go."

The men smoke as industriously as the women knit; the pipe or cigar never leaves their mouths. The butcher, baker, linendraper, and apothecary, all smoke; a piece of silver, pierced with holes, like part of a wine strainer, is screwed on the end of the pipe, to prevent the ashes falling out, and *faisant l'incendie*, and then the good citizens resign themselves, sans scruple, to their favourite amusement. In this age of wonders, indeed, I should not be at all surprised to hear of a German child being born with a pipe in its mouth,

and I am sure that I have seen some which actually appear to have become fixtures.

Notwithstanding this everlasting smoking, I used to like to see the people in the glacis enjoying themselves. As I am generally happy myself, I like to see other people so ; for let philosophers say what they will, I am convinced nothing makes us so much disposed to view our fellow creatures in a favourable light, as being in perfect good humour with ourselves ; whereas when we are in trouble and distress we get cross and ill-tempered, we are disposed to find fault with every thing, and cannot bear to see other people pleased, because we feel miserable. The Germans have all a comfortable, contented look. The women are reckoned handsome ; but they are beauties on a large scale, and if a manufactory à la Frankenstein were carried on, I verily believe one Austrian belle would make three Parisiennes. But to return to the Glacis ; it is pretty to see the people there on a summer's evening, whilst music floats in the air (for a German is never quite happy without harmony).

and lights sparkle like flying diamonds amongst the trees.

Several families live under the same roof at Vienna as in Paris; the houses, indeed, are so immensely large as to be like little towns, and one, I have been told, contains two thousand persons. The outer door of these garrisons is locked and barred every night, and the *haus-meister* or porter has a fee for opening the gates after eleven, at which time the streets are as silent as the grave, the good citizens being always accustomed to keep early hours. They are indeed seldom guilty of any of those frolicks which keep restless spirits from their pillows. The Germans have no taste but for sensual pleasures, and their only enjoyments are to eat, to drink, and to sleep. I have read somewhere of a country under the protection of a fairy, which became quite depopulated by a famine. The sprite was in despair to see his lands desolate, and having, luckily, a fine herd of swine, he turned them into men. I think this country must certainly have been Germany.

Though the houses are gloomy, the apart-

ments are splendid ; they are lofty and spacious ; the walls and ceilings are painted in fresco, and the roofs supported by marble pillars. I believe the churches and fountains are the only lions at Vienna ; but as I have no particular taste for seeing sights, I never can remember the length and breadth of any thing ; and as I have not a "Guide to Vienna" at hand, I cannot say much about them. I only know that I always admired a monument by Canova in one of the churches exceedingly, and that I have often longed to get a model of one of the figures for my dressing-table.

Very soon after my arrival at Vienna my maid wanted to persuade me to rise at six o'clock one morning, to see a procession of men, women, and children, set out on a pilgrimage to the Virgin at Maria Zell. She gave me a long account of the broad brimmed hats and bare feet of the pilgrims ; their long staffs surmounted by nosegays, their standards and crucifixes, their bands of music, and their sublime chanting. I told her, however, that though I did not in the least doubt it was all very fine

and *very imposing* (for that was Smith's word), I really had not energy enough to get up in the middle of the night to behold the sight.

After a month or two of stupidity, Vienna suddenly became gay and animated. It was the scene of the Congress of the chief European sovereigns. The ball-rooms and theatres were crowded with illustrious personages, and one could not move without stumbling against a king, or treading upon the toes of an emperor. Moving gracefully, indeed, is never a very easy exploit in apartments on the continent, from the extreme polish of the floors, and the lamentable paucity of carpets. I remember when I was presented, that I was actually obliged to slide into the presence, and that I was in imminent danger of making a salem instead of a curtesy to his Imperial Majesty. During the season of the Congress balls were incessant, and there was a couplet, popular at the time :

“ The Congress dance,
But don't advance ; ”

which I believe, like most other popular sayings, had its foundation in truth. Nothing could

possibly be more brilliant than these parties, and at them the ladies *literally* tried to outshine each other, for they were all almost covered with diamonds. It was at first very amusing to a young girl like myself, to hear "Your Majesty," and "Your Highness," repeated on all sides; but I soon grew weary of it, and began to find out that kings and princes were alarmingly like other men, only very often not half so entertaining.

As I was by birth and education one of the aristocracy, I was mortified at this discovery, for till then I had always considered legitimates quite a distinct genus, and had half suspected that they ought to have one or two more cutting-teeth in the upper jaw than the canaille.

Quite in despair, I was just beginning to grow sentimental, and think of M. Gaultier, when I was roused by the report of Buonaparte's escape from Elba, and by the intelligence that Louis le Desiré had been obliged to fly as fast as post-horses could carry him from his adoring subjects.

Napoleon was a profound politician; he had

studied the French nation *au fond*, and he knew perfectly well when he opened his bosom to the French soldiery, and told them to strike if he had injured them, that there was not the least danger that any one would take him at his word. In fact, the French are always too grateful for any thing that excites a sensation not to give it full effect. There is a passage in one of their plays, in which one man asks another if he is brave, and the other replies, slapping his breast, "*Je suis François*," which always draws down three distinct rounds of applause, besides divers other exclamations of transport. The pseudo Emperor was perfectly well acquainted with this; and even his enemies must allow that he made the most of it. Poor Napoleon! The hundred days of his recovered power were perhaps the most brilliant of his life; and it is possible that his fate might have been different, if his adversaries had been a little more expeditious in settling their arrangements against him. This seems a paradox; but the truth is, that by remaining so long in Congress at Vienna, they

were concentrated into one point, and were ready to assail him the very moment that he made his re-appearance; whilst the time it would have taken to re-assemble them if they had been separated he would have found invaluable.

He might likewise have been more likely to be successful, if the disposition of the different nations had been finally settled; for as the people were sure to be dissatisfied with their fate when they knew positively what it was to be, they would most probably have been ready to second his views in the hope of obtaining a change; whilst as long as they were in doubt, being remarkably loyal and well disposed, they were willing to remain obedient to their lawful sovereigns, till they were quite sure that they could not get as much by doing so, as they could by following the usurper.

The sensation these extraordinary events occasioned at Vienna was "prodigious!" The allied sovereigns published a furious manifesto; and, as well as I remember, a public journal of the day stated, "that the whole population of

Austria seized simultaneously upon the sword of justice." What a long sword it must have been ! I can only say, that my aunt and I were certainly not amongst the number ; for we most unheroically fled to England the first possible opportunity.

My beauty being improved by the foreign manners which I had acquired, and my fortune certainly not diminished, I found that my former adorers were not only eager to renew their homage, but that their number was augmented by fresh crowds, till I was positively besieged like a garrison town upon an enemy's frontier. Luckily my father's will had directed that I should not marry till I was of age, and as I yet wanted three years of that period, I enjoyed a temporary respite. Indeed, as the penalty of my disobedience was the loss of the greater part of my fortune, not one of my admirers was so selfish as to urge me to incur it.

Of course, in such a situation, I was in imminent danger of becoming a coquette ; but I believe I was saved from so awful a catastrophe by reading, in an account of the battle of Wa-

terloo, the death of M. Gaultier. I really was very much affected, and searched every where for a crystal *bonbon* box which he had given as a *gage d'amitié*, which I meant to preserve in memory of his fate. Unluckily I could not find it; and I am afraid I must inadvertently have given it as a plaything to the little sister of my maid. *Quelle horreur!* After such a *contretems*, how shall I ever dare again pretend to sentiment?

Peace being restored to Europe, and Buona-parté sent to St. Helena, the Congress at Vienna resumed their deliberations; but my aunt and I had scarcely sufficiently recovered from our former fright to feel inclined to rejoin them. The remaining three years of my minority passed without any but the most common place occurrences. At length the day of my majority approached; and my aunt, who was very fond of observing old customs, insisted upon my celebrating the important day which announced my arrival at years of discretion, in the castle of my ancestors, and having a sumptuous dinner provided for my tenantry, that they might eat and drink to the prosperity of their new mistress.

All this was bad enough, but it was nothing to what followed. My aunt, surprised to find that having the power to marry made me still more unwilling to relinquish my liberty, had the cruelty to propose, that as I seemed inclined to remain all my life in a state of single blessedness, I should at least do my duty to my numerous tenants, and if I would not give them a master, that I should act as their mistress; hear their complaints, and redress their grievances, with a long string of *et ceteras* which I really have not patience to enumerate. For this purpose, she proposed that I should spend the winter at the castle without any other companion but herself. I shuddered with horror at the bare idea. I pictured to myself the delights of a long winter evening in the large dark wainscoted parlour, an immense fire blazing in the old fashioned grate, with my aunt on one side and I on the other, and an overgrown tortoise-shell tabby stretching its lazy length on the rug between us; our only topics of conversation being the wonderful sagacity of the aforesaid cat, or the equally amusing tricks of a pet lap-dog.

I could not endure the prospect, and in a fit of desperation proposed to return to the continent. This was too tempting a proposal to be resisted; my aunt made a few objections for decency's sake, and then the matter was settled. I believe her original plan was to frighten me into matrimony, but as that did not succeed, the next best thing that offered was to get me again abroad.

Before we departed, it was necessary for me to revisit the castle to sign leases, order improvements, and make divers other arrangements, far too tedious to mention; and whilst I was there, a whim suddenly struck me, that my former protégé, little Martha, would be an amusing appendage to our continental tour. She was pretty, innocent, and seventeen. Her character was simplicity itself; and, what far out-balanced all her other attractions, she had never been more than five miles from the castle in her life. I anticipated great amusement from her naivété, and, wonderful to say, I was not disappointed. Indeed real innocence and unsophistication must be amusing to the votaries of fashion, as what is

new is always charming, and there are few things that they are less accustomed to.

I had been so long *blasée* with the world, that little Martha was quite refreshing. I made her take a seat in the carriage, and amused myself with her remarks all the way to town. I forget, however, what they were; indeed, though I thought them very good at the time, I suspect, that like many other very good things, they would not bear repetition.

When we arrived in town, however, I remember that Martha was quite frightened at the noise and bustle, and when urged to give an opinion, tremblingly acknowledged that she had never before imagined that "the whole world was one half so big:" also, that when she was first alarmed with the apparition of a London fog, that she thought the house was on fire, and her room must certainly be full of smoke.

Luckily for Martha's popularity, we left London before her remarks began to grow *fâde*, and her exclamations of wonder and delight when she first beheld the sea, had still the charm of novelty to recommend them. Words

cannot describe her sensations when she found herself borne upon the wide and buoyant ocean : and when the moon rose in all her majesty, spreading her silvery light from wave to wave, and each, as it rolled along throwing its curling froth high in air, like, as the Hungarian poet says,

“The sea-green coursers of old Neptune’s stable,
Tossing aloft their proud and foaming heads,”

her rapture knew no bounds. The solemn silence of the night was only broken by the deep, hollow murmuring of the billows, as they rolled up and broke against the packet, and the creaking of the ropes, as the vessel moved heavily along. Little Martha was evidently deeply impressed with the grandeur of the scene; and as the rising breeze came sighing through the sails she turned pale, and crept behind a coil of ropes as near to me as she dared, till chilled by the night air, and warned by some drops of rain, I descended below.

I did not suffer from the *maladie de mer*, and the tossing of the ship soon lulled me into a gentle dose, from which I was roused by a tre-

mendous noise and clamour of human voices, which for variety of languages could only be equalled by the Tower of Babel; Paris when occupied by the allies; or a seaport on the Mediterranean. Presently the sanctity of the state-cabin, which my aunt and I had secured for ourselves and our maids, was disturbed by an irruption of terrified females of all sizes and ages. I was some time before I could distinguish any articulate sounds amidst the general tumult, till at length my ear was struck by the somewhat precise tones of little Martha, repeating as audibly as terror would permit, the Lord's prayer, whilst she knelt as closely as possible to my birth. After this, I was quite provoked to find that the general consternation had been only excited by the steward, who being somewhat of a humourist as well as wonder dealer, had contrived to work their feelings up to agony by the story of a shipwreck.

Strange to say, after this little incident, I became tired of Martha's *naïveté*, and when, presuming on my previous encouragement, she ventured to make some remark on the unbonneted

long ear-ringed women, and pig-tailed woollen night-capped men of Ostend, I stopped her abruptly, and she was admitted no more into my presence. I supposed Smith would take care of her, but I did not trouble myself any more upon the subject; and in a week, as I no longer saw her, I had actually almost forgotten that she formed part of our suite.

When we arrived at Brussels, my aunt and I were suddenly seized with a fit of patriotism, which prompted us to visit the field of battle at Waterloo. The morning was dark and louring, and the black, heavy clouds, which hung like a gloomy curtain over our heads, seemed ready to fall upon us, and crush us with their weight. The dreary forest of Soignés, with its perforated and withered trees—the shattered condition of the houses, “riddled with bullets,”—and the innumerable tumuli which covered the plain, with here and there a horse’s hoof, a cuirass, or bit of faded cloth projecting from the mound, had a powerful effect on my imagination. It is astonishing what an effect a trifling circumstance sometimes produces on the mind: from one of

these tumuli hung, nearly buried in earth, the half-decayed flap of a coat, even yet, embroidered with its tarnished gold lace; and this simple relic brought so vividly before my eyes the picture of the hasty heaping together of the untimely slain, that I could not forbear shedding tears. My aunt was surprised at my unwonted sensibility, but the cause seemed explained when we entered the neat little church, and saw on a monumental slab the following inscription:

“ *Ci gît Henri Gaultier,*

Capitaine de la Garde Imperiale.

Il etait jeune, brave, et beau—mais il est mort ! ”

My aunt was not inclined to be sentimental, and instead of admiring what a Frenchman would have called the *touching* simplicity of the epitaph, she went into a rage about French affectation, &c. &c. to the total destruction of my feelings. This ruined the scene; which would otherwise have been fine; for, whilst we were looking at the monument, a withered crone approached, mumbling in Flemish French (which every body knows was the original language of Satan, only he was obliged to desist

from using it lest its horrid cacophony should frighten away all his attendant demons) an inquiry, if we had known the gentleman whose body lay below? and then, without waiting a reply, she led the way to her wretched hut, where (contrary to the usual habits of the Flemings, whose houses are generally cleaner than themselves) we were greeted by a heterogeneous assemblage of pigs, poultry, and children, who received us with every possible kind of outcry and lamentation. My aunt followed instinctively; but when she saw the miserable aspect of the dwelling, she shrunk back in disgust, and left Madame to expatiate on "*les beaux yeux noirs de Monsieur*," and his pathetic death, at her leisure.

We afterwards learned that this woman told the same tale of every officer, whose tomb she saw people looking at intently, and that she found her trade very profitable.

We had no other adventure that I retain any remembrance of before we reached Vienna. All that I recollect of the journey is, that the country was very flat, and that my aunt's conversa-

tion *en route* was only a lengthened dissertation on the crimes, follies, and other *disagréments* of the French. She proved to demonstration that they were the wickedest race of beings upon earth; that their gaiety was levity, their wit impiety, and their talents for conversation a mere love of tattling. In short, I never heard her before either so eloquent or so patriotic.

“Sooner than a relation of mine should wed a Frenchman,” said she, “I would follow her to her grave!” The sentiment was not new, but it was energetically expressed; and it immediately produced its full effect upon me, for I devoutly wished that M. Gaultier was alive, that I might marry him *instanter*; and since that could not be the case, I dutifully resolved to fall in love with the first *bon Français* I should meet with.

I found Vienna *bien triste*: the bustle of Congress had passed away; the soul was gone, and all that remained was but the inanimate clay. Even the amusements were become *fâde*; for the Germans, when left to themselves, are the most melancholy people of pleasure in

the world: they move at a ball as at a funeral, and they enjoy themselves with the air of performing a solemn duty. The great influx of French had made matters still worse; for, as is usual in such cases, though they had at first viewed the strangers with disgust, this feeling soon changed to astonishment, which in time softened down to admiration, and imitation followed of course. It must be allowed, however, that they were not eminently happy in the attempt. The Germans are, indeed, the most unwieldy animals in nature, and when they try to be gay, they remind one of the gambols of a frolicksome elephant, or those of a playful whale; whilst their endeavours to copy the French resemble the capers of the ambitious ass, who wished to rival the sportiveness of the little lap-dog. In short, to a German citizen, life is an affair of pounds, shillings, and pence—so much labour, so much enjoyment; and he takes care to balance the accounts regularly. Thus, the moment he finds the diversion side creditor, he flies to some place of amusement, where he enjoys himself with all his might till he has con-

scientiously acquitted the debt; he then returns home, and goes again to labour in his vocation. The higher classes are not much better, and the admixture of French manners, which they have tried to introduce, shows like silk patches on a cloth coat. No people travel so little in other countries as the Germans. The fact is, there is a heavy tax on absenteeism, and many parts of the Austrian dominions cannot be quitted without the express permission of the Emperor. This sovereign is exceedingly beloved by the populace, perhaps on account of his amiability and extreme condescension; or perhaps, because he protects them from the overwhelming oppression of the aristocracy, whose power it is his interest to abate. The only crime which is regarded as the unpardonable sin amongst the Germans of all classes is want of punctuality. No one there thinks it fashionable to be too late for dinner; and even the Emperor at Vienna takes that meal about the hour when London belles are thinking of leaving their beds.

Nothing could be more horrible than living in

such a place; days seemed years; and I felt half inclined to end my career by leaping from the ramparts, or throwing myself into the Danube. However, just as I was about to despair, a circumstance happened which quite enlivened me. I fell in love. I am sure I do not know how it was, but I suppose that Fate aimed the dart, whilst Cupid bent the bow—one must sport a metaphor upon such an occasion — and so I fell in love yawning. How! yawning? methinks I hear my reader exclaim. Yes; sad to say, my innamorato and I were both in that interesting situation when we first met — *mais écoutez, mon cher lecteur, je m'en vais vous dire toute l'histoire.*

It was at a pic-nic party in the little room at the redoute. These pic-nic parties were generally called delicious, as they were considered something like the *petits soupers* in Paris before the Revolution. The fact was, they were very select, and of course every one was anxious to go to them; and every one who had shown great anxiety to gain admittance, was also of course bound to praise; for if they had found fault, it

would have been virtually acknowledging that they had taken pains to contend for a prize which was not worth having when attained ; a fact to which very few people would like to plead guilty. Notwithstanding this indemnity from censure, however, these select parties were, like many other select things, very stupid, and I was soon tired of them. One evening, in particular, I felt much depressed. I declined dancing ; and leaning against a pillar, thought of Waterloo and M. Gaultier till I became quite sentimental, and, in an extempore fit of constancy to his memory, I refused to take any notice of the beaux who crowded round me. One by one they dropped off, and I soon stood alone. I own I did not perfectly enjoy this. It is very well to despise society, and sigh for solitude in a crowd ; but, like the old woman who called on death, one is not always well pleased to be taken at one's word. The Gods unfortunately did not make me romantic ; and, whatever delight other people may find in my society, I cannot say that I am very fond of it myself ; besides which, I never could find the least amusement in a reverie. I therefore most cordially wished my

beaux back as soon as they had departed; but, alas! "they did not come, though I did wish for them," and as I could not possibly go to seek them, I was seized with a tremendous fit of ennui, which made me yawn hideously.

Just at the moment when I was perpetrating this atrocity against good breeding, my eye chanced to fall upon a gentleman leaning against an opposite pillar, who was quietly indulging in the same elegant amusement: our glances met, and we both smiled involuntarily. The next moment my aunt came up, and led me away. In obedience to her commands, I talked and listened to an abundance of nonsense during the remainder of the evening, but, *malgré tout*, I could not get the yawning hero out of my head, and the first opportunity that occurred I inquired his name.

"It is the English Lord Seaford," replied a young German. "He is so rich that he does not know what to do with himself, and so he does nothing."

"He is very eccentric, and fancies himself clever!" said a Count of sixteen hundred quarter-

ings; who never, by any flight of fancy, could possibly indulge in such a supposition.

“He despises dress,” exclaimed a French Marquis, displaying a diamond ring, as he waved his hand to give more energy to his exclamation.

“He is insensible to love!” sighed out an Italian Count, with a tender look to me.

“He is, like most of his countrymen,” said a sensible Russian, “good, but singular. He is rich, and highly intelligent; but having every thing he can desire, he has nothing left to hope for, and thus life has lost its zest. Aware of this, he places his *summum bonum* in imperturbable tranquillity. He declares that there is nothing in the world worth vexing about, and laughs at all mental afflictions. He says, that when the wants of the body are provided for, a man’s happiness depends upon himself. He defies love, and boasts that no human being has the power to cause him a single moment of anxiety.”

What a tempting picture! what a character for a conquest! I was tempted to try to disturb his quiet; and from that moment I thought no more of M. Gaultier.

The next time I saw Lord Seaford was at a fancy ball. He was in a domino, and unmasked. Whilst we were waiting for our carriage, we stood close to him, and I had an opportunity of examining his features, which I found were really very handsome. He did not, however, take the least notice of me, but leant in his usual careless manner against a pillar. A gentleman hurried up to him. I looked at him, and found to my infinite delight that it was my cousin Danvers, who had been my sole confidant and auxiliary during the purgatorial days of my London education. He was several years older than myself, but was one of that happy class of persons who remain boys all their lives. I was delighted to see him at Vienna, as I had supposed him travelling in Greece, and I was still more enchanted to find he knew Lord Seaford. He did not recognize either my aunt or myself, as we had masks, and were besides shrouded from his observation by immense opera cloaks. My aunt was going to speak when she saw him, but I pressed her arm to implore silence.

“ My dear Seaford ! ” said he, “ the Princess of —— has just asked for you.”

“ Has she ? ” returned Seaford, with an air of the most perfect composure.

“ Won’t you fly to her feet ? ” exclaimed Danvers. “ She is the most beautiful woman in Vienna, and the most difficult of access.”

“ Y-e-s ; so I have heard,” yawned Seaford.

One of the most finished diplomatists of the age now approached. “ Lord Seaford,” said he, “ the Empress has been graciously pleased to command you to hand her to her carriage.”

“ Impossible, my dear fellow,” replied Seaford ; “ the Empress never could be so unreasonable as to demand such a Curtius-like sacrifice. Do you not see that, after trying several positions, I am at last quite comfortable. Give my compliments to the Empress, and tell her I can’t come.”

“ Your compliments ! ” cried the diplomatist, quite aghast.

“ Yes,” said Lord Seaford ; “ you know one would wish to refuse with civility.”

“ Refuse with civility ! ” muttered the discom-

fited negociator, as he walked off, meditating in what manner it would be possible to convey so unceremonious a message to "ears polite."

"Thou art a most insufferable coxcomb, Sea-ford," said Danvers, laughing; "insensible to rank or beauty. By the way, did you notice an Italian contadina among the masks. I think I never saw a more lovely figure."

This had been my dress; and I listened with breathless anxiety for Lord Seaford's answer.

"Showy!" said he, with a shrug.

I never was so disappointed in my life. What! was my beautiful figure, which had been vowed symmetry itself, to be degraded by being called only "showy." I vowed vengeance.

Danvers called upon us the morning after the ball, and laughed heartily when I told him how dreadfully I had been annoyed the night before.

"I wish to Heaven," said he, "that you could make an impression upon Seaford, and that you would cure him of his coxcombical airs. He has a thousand good qualities. He is brave, sensible, and generous; but he requires a strong excitement to draw him forth."

“ Will you assist me? ” asked I.

“ With all my heart, soul, spirit, and energy.”

“ A most energetic declaration, upon my word! ” said my aunt, laughing. “ But seriously, Emily,” continued she, “ I cannot imagine what has made you take this ridiculous folly into your head. Your title and estates entitle you to look much higher than Lord Seaford. There was the Duke of A——, and the Marquis of B——, in England; and there is the Prince C——, and even the Grand Duke D—— here; besides innumerable French counts, earls, and marquises, who are all very far superior to him.”

“ *Celui-ci est ma fantasie*,” replied I, humming the *refrain* of an old provincial ballad.

“ You are very provoking, Emily,” exclaimed my aunt. “ You are as capricious as a spoiled child.”

“ And is she not the spoiled child of fortune? ” asked Danvers; “ and has she not in her three several characters of heiress, wit, and beauty, an undeniable right to be perverse, established by courtesy, and warranted by custom? ”

“There is no denying it,” said I, “and so I *will* do as I please.”

“With all my heart, my dear,” returned my aunt, awed by my emphatic “will.” “You know, I only advise.”

She was wise to give up the point, for I was obstinate and independent. How then could I be possibly expected to listen to reason? If, as some one says, happiness is only found in conquering difficulties, I was in a fair way to become supremely blest, for nothing appeared more difficult than to attract Lord Seaford’s attention. Danvers introduced me to him, but he regarded me with the most profound indifference, and scarcely vouchsafed to speak. Hitherto, my life had been like a smooth, unvarying turnpike-road, very safe, no doubt, but amazingly insipid, along which I had rolled, scarcely sensible of my progress. Now, obstacles presented themselves, and I was in a perfect fever till I could sweep them away. How to begin I knew not. I was handsome; but Lord Seaford did not care for beauty. I had wit; but it was useless to attempt to amuse him with it, as he had

often declared that he believed the remission of his most deadly sins would hardly compensate him for enduring the purgatory of a laugh, and that he found even a smile a tremendous exertion. I had often been told that my singing was delightful ; but of what avail was this with a man who would not hear Sontag (the reigning lion of the day), lest he should be tempted to incur the fatigue of applauding.

“ I really think you *hate* music,” said Danvers to him one evening in my presence.

“ Indeed I do not,” replied Seaford. “ Hatred is a passion, and all passions destroy tranquillity. I should be very sorry to hate any thing.”

“ Then you ought to wish yourself a statue.”

“ Perhaps I should be wise if I did, for a fine statue is really a most enviable creature. It has no feeling, and yet it is universally the object of admiration.”

“ At last, then, I have detected *some* sensations in you. You think it agreeable to be admired.”

“ Not if the admiration excite either pleasure or pain. I don't like emotion.”

What was to be done with such a man? I once thought of imitating his own langour and indifference, till I recollected that it might have the effect of Tilburina's confidant in the Critic. In short I was in despair, when a lucky incident revived my hopes.

A stiff German Countess, of the old school, invited me to vegetate a few days with her in the country. My aunt was a violent aristocrate, and very fond of "extending her connections;" consequently she made it a point never to refuse a domestic visit to a family of distinction.

"People get so intimate in the same house," said she; "besides if you pay the Countess a visit alone she will fancy you a kind of *protégée*, and is quite sure to praise you wherever she goes for the remainder of her life; as people who have no other chance of shining, are very fond of patronizing, in hopes that the lustre of their *élèves* may be reflected back upon themselves. You will probably marry a German nobleman; at least I wish you to do so; and, as in this Court great jealousy exists against foreigners, it may hereafter be whispered that you

are not of high descent. If that should be the case, only fancy what an advantage it will be to have it remembered, that the Countess Von Puffendorf used to talk of the visit you paid to her in your single state. It will silence all slander in an instant, as every one who knows the Countess, must also know that it was quite impossible *she* could notice any one whose family was not without a blot."

Do you not think that my genealogy might be as well established by the British Peerage as by the *ipse dixit* of the Countess Von Puffendorf?" asked I, all the pride of my illustrious ancestry glowing in my face as I spoke.

"By no means," returned my aunt, coolly. "What German ever studies the British peerage? And who is there that does not know the Countess Von Puffendorf?"

These questions were unanswerable, and I departed forthwith for the chateau Von Puffendorf. Nothing could be more lugubrious than the aspect of this mansion. The very rooks seemed to have fled from it in dismay; the trees, clipped into formal shapes, did not dare

shoot forth a vagrant branch, lest they should derange the decorum of the scene, and stood like tall misses in a village dancing school, ranged *en colonne*, ready to flounder through the mysteries of an English country dance; no such happy confusion, however, awaited the woods of Puffendorf. There they stood in stiff and awful majesty, till my eyes grew weary of beholding them; and I felt that an earthquake or a hurricane would have been quite a relief. The canals looked dull and dank, a thick green scum, like a shell, hid even the sparkling of the waters; the flowers in the parterre were all of the same height and neatness; the grass seemed never to grow, and the walks never to be trodden; whilst every thing that *did* move, appeared put in motion by clock-work; the meals were served with so many ceremonies that they were cold before we were permitted to taste them, and the servants glided about, like full dressed automata, performing the same duties always at exactly the same hours.

Precisely at ten o'clock in the morning, my

stately hostess issued from her chamber, every fold in her stiff brocaded gown falling exactly into its proper place, and the very wind seeming to respect her punctilio, and to forbear to discompose even a hair of her high toupée. She then proceeded with solemn gravity to a fine terrace, warmed by the morning sun, and ten times did she walk up the broad gravel walk which adorned it, and ten times down the same; whilst, I believe, if the preservation of the empire had depended upon her exertions, no considerations would have induced her to make a single turn more or less. *Mon Dieu!* I feel faint at the bare recollection. I have often watched her till I have almost fancied one of her own family pictures had stepped out of its frame, and was indulging itself in the unwonted luxuries of air and exercise.

I was ready to expire with ennui, and the third day of my visit (I was to stay a month) I could find no resource but in the castle library. The extremity of my despair may be guessed from this circumstance, as till then, I had

always preferred my own thoughts to those of any one else.

The Countess piqued herself upon her library, and, though she never read herself, she always ordered a bookseller at Leipzig to supply her, every fair, with the standard works of the day. The man was tolerably honest, and though he might perchance now and then sell her an old book at a new price, or transfer a little unmarketable lumber to her shelves from his own, he had sold her a very *fair* collection (I do not mean a pun) of modern authors; a circumstance certainly highly to his credit, as he was well aware not one of his commodities was in the least possible danger of being looked into.

After turning over innumerable pages, French, English, Italian, and German, I happened to take up a volume of St. Pierre, and to open it at the part where he says there *must* be contrasts in love. The idea charmed me, and I did what, it must be confessed, readers do not always do, I profited by my studies. I resolved

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to try the effect of the maxim upon Lord Seaford; and, as soon as I returned to town, to oppose him in every respect, to dissent from all his opinions, and to do every thing that he said he disliked. I was now in despair at the length of time which must elapse before I could return to Vienna, to try the success of my plan, as I had no doubt, if I could contrive to make myself thoroughly disagreeable, that he must inevitably be in love with me in a month.

Fate was for once propitious to my wishes, and, to my infinite astonishment I found, on my return to the saloon, that Lord Seaford was actually arrived at the chateau. I was thunder-struck, and actually flattered myself, for the moment, that some kind fairy had wafted him there by magic. The mystery, however, was soon explained, and I was half disappointed to find his arrival perfectly natural, and, in fact, effected by the most common place means that could well be imagined.

The Countess' only nephew, the Baron Steinholtz, whose arrival had been long anxiously expected at the castle, was one of those incon-

gruous animals which may be called anglicised Germans; and which are even a worse variety of the species than the frenchified ones. This interesting youth, not being able to endure the thought of rustivating without society at his aunt's country seat, had invited Lord Seaford and Danvers to accompany him down; and they (the former, mortifying to relate, not knowing that I was there) had accepted the invitation. My unexpected presence, however, did not seem to cause Lord Seaford the slightest emotion, and he absolutely took no more notice of me than of my lap-dog; nor indeed so much, for he scolded Bijou, and told him to get out of his way.

This was excessively provoking; however, I felt *en force*, and, resolving to be entertaining, I gave Danvers a detailed account of my country miseries. He was much amused; the Baron laughed, and I flattered myself that even Lord Seaford was listening with attention, when he suddenly arose, and saying that he had just thought of some orders which he wished to give to his groom, he left the room. I could really

have wept with vexation; luckily the Countess happened at the very moment to make her appearance in full majesty, and the sudden interruption of my remarks was attributed to awe at her august presence.

The Countess was visibly disconcerted. Brought up in all the rigid strictness of German etiquette, form, with her, had become second nature; and the sudden and unexpected arrival of her nephew and his guests had grievously disarranged the usual regular routine of her mansion. The domestic economy was utterly ruined; every thing was thrown into confusion, and the staid, solemn servants, were actually seen flying about the house in all directions, like animated statues.

The unlucky cause of this disturbance took little notice of his aunt's entrance, but sat with his legs stretched out, negligently picking his teeth; for, as is usual in similar circumstances, he caricatured the manners which he meant to copy.

"How do, aunt?" said he, carelessly, without offering to rise.

The Countess was horrified at such a reception; she immediately drew herself up to her full height, and curtesying with appalling dignity, she replied: "M. le Baron Steinholm, as the son of my sister, you are welcome to my castle."

"I knew that, so I have not only come myself, but I have brought two friends with me. I believe you are the nearest relation I have, and the devil's in it, if a man can't make free with his own relations, as the English play says."

The Countess looked at him with an air expressive of as much detestation and disgust as could well beam from a human face, and then, disdaining reply, she majestically sailed out of the room.

We all met at dinner. It was served precisely in the old German fashion, for the Countess would have deemed it a crime little short of high treason, to have suffered the slightest innovation. A magnificent plateau, surrounded by various articles of ornament or confectionery filled the centre of the table, and a few *entremets* were placed on the sides, but the meat was

carved at a side table, and handed round that every one might take a slice. The Baron raved at this, and expatiated upon the superior elegance of the English custom.

“You will see nothing like this now at Vienna!” said he.

“Then I shall have still more occasion than before, to lament the degeneracy of modern manners,” returned the stately Countess.

“I am afraid my Lord,” said the Baron, addressing Seaford, “that you find nothing you can eat.”

“On the contrary,” replied his lordship, “I think this the only manner in which the half-brutalized operation of devouring food can be conducted with any degree of delicacy. The present Viennese fashion of serving dinners *à l’Anglaise* is horrible. Joints of under-roasted mangled meat give the idea of a dog kennel, rather than a repast of civilized beings; and a dish should never be suffered to pall the senses a single instant after it has been tasted.”

“*They manage these things much better in France,*” said Danvers; “a German dinner

reminds me of a piece of Egyptian architecture, every thing is on a large scale, simple yet solid; whilst a French dinner, like a Grecian temple, is as light as elegance itself."

"Yet even in France, I have been often excessively disgusted at table, for the French women eat like men, and discuss the quality of the viands, like professed gourmands."

"And why should they not? Is not cookery confessedly a female science?"

"It may have been so in the days of the antediluvians, when women of quality wore a bunch of keys at their girdles, and young ladies understood the mysteries of pickling and preserving; but *now*—I declare I would almost as soon hear a wife of mine descant learnedly on the breeding of cattle, as to find her *au fait* in the economy of the kitchen."

"I quite disagree with your lordship," said I. "I think it absolutely necessary to know the component parts of every dish that comes to table, and I give my cook ten louis a year extra, because he is the only person who ever made an *omelette soufflée* exactly to my taste. *Pauvre*

Jean! I was inconsolable when he was ill last winter. Had he died, I must actually have perished for want of food, as I never could have endured a *soufflée* from any hand but his. Then his *dindons aux truffes*; his *perdrix aux choux*; his *poulets à la braize*; his *fricandeaux, ragouts*, and *risolles!* Oh! should fate wrest him from me, I should be the most miserable of human beings!"

"Your ladyship is then a professed gourmande," said Lord Seaford, addressing me, I verily believe, for the first time, and fixing his eyes upon me, with almost as much horror as the Countess had a short time before surveyed her nephew.

"By no means. I am not in the least *recherché* in my dishes, and the commonest food pleases me, so that it be well arranged. But it is the exquisite flavour which Jean imparts to his *plats* that I admire. It is that last finish of the master-hand, which, like the pencil of a superior artist, gives animation to the whole; that Promethean touch—that spark of superior genius—that—"

“And all this enthusiasm,” said Lord Seaford, “is inspired by the merits of a cook?”

“And what nobler theme can we find?” rejoined Danvers. “Is it not the only distinctive mark that has yet been discovered of the genus of man, that he is a cooking animal? Hyænas laugh, parrots talk, monkeys dress, and dogs, elephants, pigs, nay even cats, reason. These qualities we share in common with the brutes; and cookery is the only point in which we decidedly excell them. The gastronomic art is also of much more importance to society in general than may be readily conceived. How many tyrants have been made such solely by a bad digestion? Even Nero and Caligula were never so cruel as when they had eaten ill-dressed dinners; and the woman who appealed to Philip fasting, showed herself a profound casuist as to the real nature of things. The Great Unpaid would not be half so severe in their judgments against poachers and other delinquents, if French cooks formed part of their establishments; and the frame-breaking, cinder-pelting, riotous populace of England, would soon be re-

duced to submission, if deprived of such indigestible viands as roast beef, Cheshire cheese, and boiled potatoes, moistened by brown stout."

"Bravo!" exclaimed I, "my dear cousin, how grateful I ought to feel for the admirable manner in which you have expressed my sentiments. I assure your lordship," continued I, addressing Seaford, "that I think the luxury of a good table one of the few things which can reconcile one to endure the tedium of life."

Lord Seaford did not utter a single syllable, but his eyes were eloquent, and they said as plainly as eyes could speak, "Is it possible that so young a creature can have a taste so entirely depraved!"

Madame Von Puffendorf, who took all I said quite *au pied de la lettre*, was also very much shocked. "I must confess," said she, drawing herself up, "that I am not acquainted with the modern habits of the world; for I own candidly I never did expect to hear such sentiments fall from the mouth of any young lady of rank, even of—" she paused an instant, and then concluded, "of any nation in the known world."

“Well saved, my good aunt,” cried the Baron. “I declare I thought you were going to say England.”

The Countess darted at him a look of ineffable contempt, but did not condescend to reply. During the remainder of the repast, I observed, that though Lord Seaford did not again address me, he covertly watched all I said and did. I was enchanted. “*Io Pæan!*” thought I, “I have attracted his attention, and now the day is my own!”

Notwithstanding my rapture, however, I listened to every word that was spoken, in order that I might discover all the tastes and feelings of my intended lover, and shape myself accordingly. Danvers assisted me in this, and turned the conversation upon such points as he thought would draw Lord Seaford out. Principally he spoke of love and marriage, and *en passant* gave a description of the woman he would chuse were he to take a wife. The Baron followed his example. I forget what they said, of course they both pictured paragons, but when it came

to Lord Seaford's turn to speak, I did not lose a syllable.

“The woman I could love,” said he, “must be soft, pensive, and confiding. Grace must govern her every movement, and a sweet feminine indecision appear in all she says and does; she must be timid even to a fault, and ignorant of every thing save the mild duties of affection. Gentleness must be her most striking characteristic, and she must turn from every occasion of display, as the tender mimosa shrinks from the pollution of the slightest touch. Her sylph-like form must only seem to glide, and her harmonious voice must never breathe above a whisper. In short she should be quiet and immovable, as a holy image in a splendid shrine, seen only to be worshipped.”

I was delighted to hear so full an exposition of my intended lover's thoughts; and I immediately determined to dance, ride horses, talk incessantly, and affect to be a blue-stockings.

Accordingly, as soon as we quitted the dinner table, I invited the Baron to waltz, he hesitated. Englishmen never try to make themselves agree-

able, or do what they are asked to do, and yet, what German could refuse to waltz? Poor fellow! he was like a duckling brought up under the superintendence of a hen, his natural and acquired tastes were most lamentably at variance; at last nature prevailed, and he gave me his hand. The Countess resigned hers to Danvers, and Lord Seaford was left to meditate solus on the inconsistency of the sex. I saw that he was shocked, but as he did not retire, I was satisfied; I knew that I danced well, and excited by the idea that Seaford was observing me, I surpassed myself.

The moment the dance was ended, the Baron, the Countess, and Danvers, absolutely overwhelmed me with compliments, but Seaford did not join in them. He left the room abruptly, and did not appear again during the remainder of the evening. I confess I was chagrined, and an excessive depression followed the high spirits I had indulged in; I could not recover myself, and complaining of fatigue, I retired early.

I was not, however, inclined to sleep, and dismissing my maid, I sat down, with a book in

my hand, which I professed my intention to read. Read ! alas ! bitter would have been the agony of the poor author if he had seen the manner in which I treated his labours ; it is true that my eyes were fixed upon the page, but not a single idea was conveyed to my mind, and I sat as little interested in one of the most pathetic love stories ever penned, as though I had been looking at the tedious pages of a Dutch grammar.

Heigho ! why did I sigh ? That was exactly what I was so anxious to discover, and yet, the more I thought upon the subject the more I was perplexed. I had no occasion to sigh, I had all the world could give, and every thing I could wish, save the heart of Lord Seaford. This I had not (here I sighed again) ; but even, if it were laid at my feet, I did not know that it would be of any service to me ; on the contrary, it could not be of the slightest consequence to my peace, whether he ever thought of me again or not. Indeed I ought to wish that he might not, as I had not the least intention to return his passion. Oh no ! *that* was quite out the question.

Marry him ! I never thought of such a thing ; and yet if I took such pains to win his heart, should I not commit myself ? Was it honourable to *try* to make him wretched ? I was quite perplexed. I threw down my book ; my taper was waning to its close ; I was too cross to disattire myself, and, in a fit of ill-humour, I rang my bell passionately for my maid ; my summons was not instantly obeyed, and I rang again so violently, that poor Smith, who had fancied herself at liberty to go to bed, and was, I believe, at that moment quietly dreaming, rushed terrified into my presence half dressed, half asleep, and quite stupid. This was enough to provoke me ; in fact, I was delighted to have a legitimate cause to find fault, and I scolded the poor girl so unmercifully, that, as she owned afterwards, she thought some of the ghosts of the old castle must certainly have appeared to me, and put me out of temper.

The following morning I rose with the prudent determination to make no more attacks upon the heart of Lord Seaford, till I had ascertained whether, in case of my success, I might

be prevailed upon to give my own in exchange; but an unexpected event which awaited me deranged all my plans. The prudery or punctilio of the Countess had been awakened by the arrival of her nephew and his friends, and to remove any shadow of impropriety which might exist from their remaining at the castle whilst I was her sole guest, she had sent invitations to my aunt; a tall heavy looking German Prince, her first cousin; and to his younger brother, who had married a French wife; a host of visitors thus crowded into the castle, and my good resolutions were put to flight. It is true, it ought not to have made any difference, but alas! how many things happen that ought not! The Prince was rich, an absolute sovereign in his own domain, and had sixteen hundred quarterings; consequently my aunt thought him exactly the person calculated to make me happy in a wedded life. She owned that he was stupid, fond of the pleasures of the table to the grossest excess, and it was whispered *un peu brutal* to those in his power; but these were matters of no consequence, and she ardently

wished him to become her nephew. His brother, the Count de L—— was a finished diplomatist, but without one idea beyond the intrigues of a court; his wife was a French coquette, very pretty and very affected; she evidently laid herself out to please Seaford, and thus even my conscience was interested in preventing her success. It was not to be endured, that the heart I could not subdue, should fall a victim to a French *married* woman! my *amor patriæ*, my morality, all the better feelings of my soul, rose up against such a *denouement*, and I was really obliged to pursue *my* plans against the peace of Lord Seaford, to save him from the machinations of my rival. The only difficulty was to recommence; I had resolved on affecting bluesism, but I now found that would be too much trouble. I was too angry to study, and though very little knowledge is required to figure as a *bas bleu*, I had not time to acquire even that; I therefore resolved to be a dasher, and to win Lord Seaford's affections by outraging all his feelings of propriety.

From the moment that I had first excited his

lordship's attention, he continued covertly to observe me, and I had the satisfaction to see that even when he was talking to Madame de L. he was often watching in what manner I received the devoirs of the Prince and the Baron. The former, indeed, did not trouble me with many attentions, as his ideas of his own importance were as vast as himself, and he thought the intimation that he was ready to honour me with his hand was quite as much as my weak brain was able to endure. The latter, on the contrary, who had not the title of Princess to bestow, and who, having English horses, English dogs, English carriages, and English servants, wanted an English wife to complete his establishment, had sense enough to perceive that I was not one who would, unsought, be won, and accordingly he tormented me incessantly with his assiduities. I detested him, as I hate any thing at second hand; and borrowed manners are even worse than borrowed clothes or borrowed wit; nevertheless, to torment Lord Seaford I condescended to be bored a whole evening with his folly. I laughed at his bad jokes,

praised his French accent (it was like that of a German Jew), and finally, I shudder at the thought, listened to the whole pedigree of his horses.

Lord Seafood stood at a little distance during this conversation, in which, however, he did not condescend to join, looking at me more in sorrow than in anger ; but when at last I laid a bet that I would run a race with the Baron, on horseback, the following morning, I saw an expression of unqualified disgust flush over his fine features, and he quitted the room abruptly. I own I half repented, and would have given the world to draw back, but it was too late to recede, and I did *mon possible* to endeavour to seem interested in a debate respecting a *fête champêtre*, which the Countess intended giving the following week. All the Court were invited, and all the ancient country noblesse, who usually, lived shut up in the solemn dignity of their chateaux, intended on this occasion to emerge from their hiding places. It was to be the most splendid thing ever known ; so far all agreed, but a little difference of opinion arose when

the minutiae were entered into. The principal point of discussion was, whether it should be a fancy ball. The Countess thought not; there appeared something derogatory to her dignity in the idea that her guests should wear fantastic or assumed habits, and she wished to see them shine in all their native splendour; whilst the Baron, whose imagination was excited by a vision of himself as an English jockey, strongly contended for the masquerade. Words ran high, and at last it was determined that the contending parties should abide by my decision. Of course I was eagerly appealed to; but alas, I had not heard a single syllable of what had passed; I did not like, however, to confess ignorance; and as many others have done before me, I prepared to give judgment without knowing any thing at all of the merits of the case.

Unfortunately, however, Lord Seaford returned at the critical moment when I was called upon to speak; a circumstance which certainly did not contribute to the enlightening of my understanding.

“Don’t you think, Lady Montessor,” asked

the Baron, "that fancy dresses at the ball will give life and animation to the scene?"

"Undoubtedly," said I, "they cannot fail to do so."

"What!" exclaimed the Countess, indignantly; "Is it possible that Lady Montessor can be an advocate for the gross ribaldry and low buffoonery of a masquerade! Can she wish to see a ball in the ancient hall of a baronial mansion, lowered to the grade of a *redoute* at a theatre?"

"Oh no," cried I, hastily, "I hate masquerades *in toto*. I can't bear assumed characters at any time, even at the carnival."

Both parties looked aghast, for having agreed to abide by my opinion, they naturally wished to discover what it was.

"My dear Emily," observed my aunt, after a short pause, "I really think that you don't know what you are saying."

The fact was undeniable. I attempted to apologize, but as usual, apologies only made things worse, and overwhelmed with shame and

confusion, I retired to my chamber to meditate on what had passed.

One only idea filled my mind ; it was that I had lost Seaford, and this gave me more torture than I can describe. The expression of his countenance chilled me to the heart, and I found that I had gone too far. I was, however, consoled when Danvers told me the next morning, that his Lordship had disturbed him by six o'clock, to ask whether he thought me mad, or only a fool ; and that when Danvers remonstrated on the unreasonableness of expecting an answer to so difficult a question, at such an extraordinary hour, he retired as suddenly as he had appeared, leaving Danvers in doubt whether it was indeed his Lordship whom he had seen, or only his ghost, arrayed in the spectre-like costume of dressing-gown and slippers.

The idea that Seaford could not sleep for thinking of me, acted as a strong stimulant, and I no longer repented my rash engagement with the Baron. In fact I was impatient for the moment of starting to arrive, and I was ready sooner than my swain. Arrayed in my habit

and riding hat, I stood at the window, whip in hand, impatiently watching for the horses to be led out, when Lord Seaford approached me.

“I do not doubt that you will laugh at me, Lady Montessor,” began he, “but—but—I should feel very much obliged if you would not ride to day,”

“And of what possible consequence can it be to you, my Lord, whether I do or not?”

“None, certainly, none in the least.”

“Have you any reason for making such a request?”

“A foolish fancy; a kind of *pressentiment* has taken possession of my mind—”

“A what, my Lord?”

“I see I was very absurd; I had certainly no right to interfere, yet as your compatriot I felt anxious to prevent ——”

“What? I own myself so stupid as to be totally unable to divine your Lordship’s meaning.”

“To prevent my countrywoman from degrading her sex, or making herself ridiculous.”

“Your Lordship has taken a great deal of unnecessary trouble,” returned I, haughtily, for I

was excessively mortified; "and I regret exceedingly that it should have been on my account."

I had not time to say more, for at that instant Danvers came hastily into the room, and exclaimed, "The fates are against you, my dear cousin! You cannot ride to day, and the Baron, however unwilling, must postpone the pleasure of showing himself your slave."

"Does he decline the contest, then?" asked I, excessively vexed at Lord Seaford's look of triumph.

"No! but your mare has slipped her shoulder."

This was provoking, as I had no other horse at the chateau, save my groom's cob; and my aunt had only those which drew her carriage. The Prince and the Baron now appeared, and seeing how much I was disappointed, each offered the choice of his stud. I hesitated; it was now impossible for a woman of any spirit to give up riding, even if I had been obliged to mount one of the old coach-horses of the Countess herself; and at last, as I did not wish to favour the Baron *too* much, I accepted the loan of

a beautiful Hanoverian belonging to the Prince. His Highness was in raptures, and my aunt's countenance beamed with pleasure, whilst that of Lord Seaford darkened with a coming storm. The horses were led out; my intended courser was faultless in shape and make, but he stood at least sixteen hands high, and his bright eyes flashed fire as he bent his arched neck, and proudly endeavoured to shake off the controlling hand of the groom. I am naturally rather a coward, and though I had learnt to ride under the best masters of both France and England, and could exhibit *à merveille*, either in a riding school or the park, with my groom close behind, and my own well trained Arabian for a Bucephalus, I own my heart beat most awfully at the thought of trusting myself on the back of this fierce looking creature, and I should have been very glad to find any plausible pretext to get myself out of the scrape, had not Lord Seaford most injudiciously advised me not to venture. This decided me in an instant, my only answer was a look of contempt; and scarcely availing myself of the assistance of my attend-

ant beaux, I sprang upon the horse ; the groom loosed his head, and the fiery animal darted off with the rapidity of an arrow. I tried to pull him in, but alas ! my strength was totally un-availing ; my weight was nothing to him, and he appeared to me flying off to join his wild companions in the forests. The thought of Mazeppa crossed my mind, and in my horror at the idea of being carried, I knew not whither, I tried to throw myself off. This, however, for some time I found impossible, for the motion was so rough that I could not disengage myself from the saddle ; the Hanoverian horses, indeed, lift their legs tremendously high from the ground, whenever they move, (I believe they are taught to trot in baskets,) and the gallop of my courser was like the rocking of a ship in a heavy gale of wind. I felt that I was losing my respiration, and in despair made a last effort, which was successful. I fell on the soft green turf, unhurt, and though terror rendered me unable to move, I did not lose the possession of my senses ; in a few seconds, two horsemen appeared in sight ; they were Lord Seaford and Danvers.

“ She has fallen,” cried the former ; “ See ! there is the horse flying across the plain without a rider ! ”

The next instant they perceived me, and, alighting, were both immediately at my side. My eyes were closed ; I could not speak ; and they thought me dead : “ Curses on my folly ! ” exclaimed Seaford ; “ I should have wept—implored—entreated ; but it is now too late ; she is gone ! ”

“ I hope not,” said Danvers, trying to raise me.

“ Emily ! my adored Emily ! ” shrieked Seaford, in an agony of despair ; “ I will not survive thee.”

“ Hush ! I think she still breathes.”

Seaford’s transport was as violent as his grief. Danvers begged him to support me whilst he rode back for assistance ; and accordingly he placed his arm round my waist, my head resting on his shoulder, though he trembled so violently that he had almost as much occasion for support as I had. My situation became exceedingly awkward ; I felt that I

ought not to remain in so tender a position, and yet, how could I open my eyes? Luckily my dilemma did not continue long; Danvers soon returned with abundance of assistance, and I was conveyed to the chateau in safety.

My aunt, the Prince, the Countess, and the Baron, were all apparently *desespérés* at my accident, though the Countess, I suspect, was secretly rather pleased that so unfeminine an adventure had had an unpleasant termination. In the meantime I thought of nothing but Lord Seaford's exclamations, and I was not sorry that my fall furnished me with an excuse for secluding myself from society till I had attained sufficient confidence to meet his eye without blushing. The day fixed for the ball arrived ere I had again joined the family party, and, as I was quite recovered, I determined to make that the scene of my *debut*; particularly as I thought I should feel less embarrassment in meeting Seaford in a crowd than only in the presence of our friends. All the mansion was in a bustle. The servants were clothed in their state liveries, and the grey-headed Swiss porter,

almost bent double beneath the weight of gold lace he was adorned with, hurried to and fro to answer the frequent summons of his bell, which was in constant requisition.

My dressing-room was in front of the castle, and as I did not wish to descend till the company were all assembled, I sate at the window watching the arrival of the different carriages, as the lights borne by their numerous attendants came flashing up the long avenue. A whole army of footmen, in magnificent liveries, and bearing flambeaux, awaited their approach. Equipages of the most sumptuous description filled the court; and the rich dresses of the jagers of the Hungarian nobles, with their highly ornamented carriages and superb horses, so forcibly struck my fancy, that I could not help exclaiming aloud, "How very much I should like to go to Hungary."

"La! my lady," cried Smith, apparently horror struck at the supposition, and dropping a bottle of eau-de-Cologne, which she had in her hand.

“ And pray what is your objection,” asked I, pettishly.

“ I’m sure, my lady, I meant no harm ; but the Hungarians are such monsters, that it put my heart in my mouth to hear your ladyship even mention such a thing.”

“ But why ?”

“ They are half savages ; and they say that in their own country they are cannibals, and do really eat people alive.”

Smith lowered her voice to a whisper whilst communicating this astounding fact, at which I laughed immoderately. “ I had no idea,” said I, “ that you were such a proficient in natural history, Smith. Pray where did you acquire your knowledge ?”

Smith was piqued. “ I assure your ladyship,” said she, “ that I had it from one who knows all about it, and would not deceive me.”

“ But who is this nameless *savant* ?”

“ The Baron’s valet, who has been there *in propria personâ* himself.”

There was no contending against such a display of learning as this, so I bade her begin

to arrange my hair; but Smith's mind still brooded over the insult which I had offered to her information, and crêping my curls with an energy which pulled half the hair off my head, she returned to the subject.

“ I hope your ladyship is not offended ; but the Hungarians are worse than heathens. I could tell you such stories as would make your hair stand on end.”

“ That is, what you leave of it ; which will not be much, if you continue to pull it so unmercifully.”

“ I'm sure I beg your ladyship's pardon.” Then, after a pause, “ I would not go to live in such a country for all the world,” continued she, muttering to herself.

This opposition from my maid made me think more seriously upon the subject than I otherwise should have done, and my passing fancy soon became a positive resolution to go to Hungary, the very first opportunity that presented itself.

The meeting between Lord Seaford and myself was very awkward ; we both felt most alarmingly conscious, and seemed equally to dread

any kind of explanation. Lord Seaford, however, could not avoid congratulating me on my escape.

“ You must have been dreadfully terrified,” said he, “ when you found that you had lost all command of the horse.”

“ I was still more so afterwards,” returned I, “ as I had not the slightest idea where he was taking me; and, even when I had thrown myself from his back, I feared that I was in some desert place, where no human being would ever find me, and that I should be soon devoured by wild beasts.”

“ Could you think that I—that is, that your friends, all your friends, would not pursue you? Could you be so unjust both to yourself and them?”

I was confused by his manner, and answered, hastily, “ Nevertheless I was delighted to see your lordship and Danvers, and I was only afraid that you would pass without perceiving me.”

“ Ah,” cried he, “ did *you* see us first? Then you were not insensible?”

A deep burning blush was my only answer, for the consciousness that I had unguardedly committed myself, overwhelmed me with confusion. A mist seemed to spread around me, I did not dare to look at him, or to utter another syllable :

—— “ His dark eyes kept fixed on mine,
Which sank beneath their burning gaze.
Mine sank—but yet I felt the thrill
Of that look burning on me still.
I heard no word that others said—
Heard nothing, save one low-breathed sigh.” *

We neither spoke, but our silence was far more eloquent than words, and that moment was the most delightful I ever experienced in my life. My aunt, however, broke the charm ; she approached, and asked Lord Seaford why he did not dance ?

“ Who, *I* ? returned he, relapsing into his former manner ; “ *I* dance ? *I* descend to an exertion which levels the man of talent and the fool ? Surely your ladyship cannot suppose that any person, above the mental capacity of an idiot, would condescend to engage in the giddy whirl of a waltz.”

“ But I should like to dance one,” said I, timidly, and blushing at my own assurance; “ Will you refuse to be my partner?” continued I, after a short pause, looking up in his face.

He hesitated, he was silent a few minutes, and then, smiling, he held out his hand—“ Do with me as you please,” said he, “ you know your power.” My triumph was complete, and that evening, ere we parted, Lord Seaford had asked and obtained the promise of my hand. My heart, I am afraid, had slipped away in my endeavour to secure his.

Nothing is so delightful in reality, and yet so difficult to make interesting on paper, as the time which intervenes between the acceptance and marriage of a favoured lover; particularly as we had no obstacles to contend with, for my aunt, though I believe in her heart she was very sorry, had too much sense to commit herself by a fruitless opposition; and I considered my visit to the chateau Von Puffendorf as the very happiest event in my life.

Of course our marriage was quite a *bonne*

bouche to all the gossiping dowagers of Vienna; and many an unfortunate coach-horse was trotted almost to death by his mistress' anxiety to be the first to communicate the intelligence. Many shook their heads, some sighed, some laughed, and every coterie patronized a different version of the story. As no two could agree on the manner in which so extraordinary a circumstance was brought about, of course no one ever dreamt of the truth, and I remember, of the two *historiettes* most in vogue, one was that Lord Seaford was (secretly) a gamester, and a ruined man, to whom my fortune was exceedingly convenient; and the other (the wretches! I can't imagine how they could fancy such a thing) was that, *entre nous*, I was suddenly become in a violent hurry to get married!

Lord Seaford and I cared very little for these rumours; the necessary papers from England were sent for, the wedding-clothes were bought, even the settlements were completed, and at last the awful day was fixed. As my fancy for visiting Hungary had not subsided, it was agreed

that we should make a tour in that kingdom immediately after our wedding, attended only by our body servants; whilst my aunt, with the rest of our establishment, remained at Vienna.

“The honeymoon you know, my dear Emily,” whispered Seaford, “should be passed in privacy.”

I blushed, and owned that I did not see any very great necessity for much company; and so the arrangement was carried *nem. con.*

The evening before my marriage, as Smith was undressing me, I found her unusually silent, whilst her mind seemed labouring with something which she found it quite impossible to bring forth. My own mind was so fully occupied that it was sometime before I took any notice of her agonies, till at length they became so violent, that I was moved to inquire the cause.

“The fact is,” said Smith, “that your ladyship has always been a kind generous lady, and I have always loved your ladyship extremely.”

“Well,” said I, laughing, “and is it this new discovery, which you appear to have just made, that occasions you to seem so unhappy?”

“ No, my lady ; I—I have always thought so, and I have always been quite happy.”

“ Then I was mistaken, and there is nothing the matter ? ”

“ No, my lady ; but—but—” Smith was posed, she paused, and then added, abruptly, “ I can’t go to Hungary my lady.”

“ Ridiculous ! ”

“ Indeed I cannot, my lady. Upon my word and honour I have reasoned with myself by the hour. Says I—”

“ I do not want to hear what you said, but what you say. Are you earnest in your determination ? ”

“ Quite, my lady ; though it quite goes against me to say so.”

“ But have you considered what an inconvenience you are exposing me to. I cannot ask my aunt to let me have her maid, as you know she has been very poorly for some time, and Harris is the only person she can bear about her when she is ill.”

“ Oh no, my lady, it is morally impossible you can take Mrs. Harris. Lady Arlington

cannot exist without her, particularly as she is sure to take on so for the loss of your ladyship."

I smiled. "Well Smith," said I, "but what am I to do? You must be aware that you have not treated me well, in leaving this to the last moment."

"I'm sure—I—I—wouldn't treat your ladyship ill for all the world," sobbing.

"But is your dislike to Hungary your only reason for this strange behaviour?"

"Why—to be sure, your ladyship—there is one other—little—reason—besides;" still sobbing.

"And what is it?"

"I've promised—to marry—the Baron's valet next week,—and—he can't—leave his master."

"And so he obliges you to leave your mistress? Upon my word, I am very much obliged to him."

"He did not wish to incommode your ladyship in the least."

"You have twice repeated that you did not intend to incommode me, and, as you are not

quite a fool, I suppose the interpretation of this is, that you have some person to recommend in your place?"

"Why, my lady, I do own, I did think little Martha —"

"Little Martha!" cried I, catching eagerly at the idea; "Delightful! She is the very person! I had really quite forgotten her."

"I have taught her to dress hair just in your ladyship's style, and she has practised upon me every day."

I was quite amused at this, and sending for Martha, I was struck with the alteration that "foreign travel," and the able instructions of Smith, had produced in her appearance and manner. She had still enough *naïveté* to be entertaining, but she had now learnt the necessary tact to know how to bring it forward only in the right place. Her manners also were very much polished, and her person was improved. In short, I was very well satisfied with the change, whilst I was absolutely affected at the poor girl's raptures, and the almost clannish devotion which she expressed towards my person.

This momentous affair being finally arranged, I went to bed—but not to sleep—for, in spite of my frivolity, I had very serious notions of the importance of the duties which I was about to undertake. The horrible idea that I should soon put my happiness out of my own power, and that when the awful vow had been once pronounced there was no going back, took strong possession of my imagination; and I conjured up a thousand frightful fancies, that almost terrified me out of my senses. “I never can promise obedience,” thought I, “unless I make a mental reservation; for I never did any thing I did not like in my life. I must certainly tell Seafood that I have changed my mind.”

With this resolution I fell asleep. However, in the morning, concluding, on mature consideration, that I must be married some time or other, I thought it might be as well to let the matter go on.

We were married: and, though I was a little nervous, we got through the ceremony pretty well. We then sat down to a cold colla-

tion, which neither of us had the want of decency to taste; and, after a due proportion of tears and embraces, we parted from our friends, and I soon found myself in our travelling-carriage alone with my husband. I cannot say that I felt disposed to be particularly entertaining, but Seaford was just the reverse — he quite came out upon me; for I had no idea before that he could be one half so agreeable, and I was glad to find that I had no reason to repent my choice. My spirits rose, for his gaiety awakened mine; and before we had proceeded many miles from Vienna I was able to admire the prospects, which really were delightful, and to enjoy the pleasures of our journey — almost as well as if I had not so lately vowed to be a slave.

At Presburg we staid for the night; and after we had dined, for, in spite of our interesting situation, our long journey had made us condescend to take some dinner, we strolled out to enjoy the fresh evening breeze upon the banks of the Danube.

Every thing appeared delicious. I have been

told that Presburg is an ugly town, and the Danube a muddy river; but I am sure to me it seemed Elysium, and I never liked any country so well as this:

“I gazed with rapture on the winding stream,
Its waters dancing in the moon’s pale beam —
The verdant plains — the gently waving trees —
And sighed to hear the murm’ring of the breeze.”

In short, I was in a fair way to get romantic, when the charm was broken by a harsh voice asking charity in English! I turned hastily towards the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and saw a tall, thin old man standing at a little distance, leaning against a tree, and holding in his arms a beautiful little spaniel. I was too happy myself to bear to see any one in misery, and flying to him, I gave him the contents of my purse.

“God bless you,” said he, emphatically: “Now I need not sell my dog.”

There was something in the man’s manner so far above a common beggar, that Seaford’s curiosity was excited, and he also advanced towards him.

“Who are you?” asked he.

“I *was* an English scholar, and an author — I *am* a famishing Hungarian pauper; but, in every varied situation of life, I trust I have always been a gentleman.”

The oddity of this reply increased our interest, and we sat down on a mossy bank to hear his story. He did not require many persuasions to induce him to tell it—people seldom do when the tale is about themselves, and we were just in the best possible disposition to hear it.

“I was educated at an English university,” said he, “and was designed by my parents for the church. I had, however, no inclination for the vocation, and my father dying shortly before I took orders, I determined to employ my little patrimony in visiting every known part of the globe. In pursuance of this design I have long been a wanderer; youth and manhood have passed away, and now the frosts of age have silvered over my brow, without my having made any friends or formed any connections, whilst my fortune gradually dwindled away, till at last I found myself without a stiver, and I

feared that I should be obliged to sell even this poor creature, who has been my faithful companion for the last four years, to preserve a little longer my miserable life. You have saved me from this alternative, and it is not in the power of words to express my gratitude."

"But when you found poverty creeping upon you, why did you not relinquish your rambles, and try to obtain some fixed employment ere it was too late?"

"I *could* not, for habit had become second nature; and yet, even in the full indulgence of my wishes, I was not satisfied. Tired of the world and of myself, I roamed from city to city, and from place to place, in the hope that change of scene might procure the happiness I sought. It was in vain. A heavy weight hung on my heart, and poisoned every pleasure. I knew too much; long habits of observance had opened to my view the breasts of men, and who can read there without disgust. I found that one sole principle animated mankind, the degrading one of self interest. The thirst of gold was the *primum mobile* of all their actions, and the only

sentiment inspired by the sight of a stranger was the sordid calculation of how much money they might hope to realize by his presence."

"I believe you may be right with regard to France and Italy," said Lord Seaford.

"And I am afraid we may add England and Germany," added I; "but are not the Swiss still simple and unsophisticated? I have heard so much of their fascinating innocence and almost patriarchal manners, that I have been half my life, dying to visit their country."

The old man smiled. "Alas, madam," said he, "that fascinating innocence has quite disappeared, if, indeed, it ever existed. The innkeepers of Geneva and Lausanne are now as expert at running up a bill, and making the most of their customers, as even their more experienced brethren of Brighton or Dover."

"And is Hungary also corrupted?" asked Seaford.

"No," returned the wanderer; "it still retains some of its original purity; though now travellers penetrate into its wilds, and even the

romantic passes of the Carpathian mountains echo to the stranger's tread. But as Hungary is deficient in most objects which attract female curiosity, it is never likely to be overrun with visitors like France and Italy."

"Why does that follow?" asked I.

"Because, women rule men, and half their journeys are undertaken to gratify female caprices; and the mines and mountains of Hungary, the only things it contains really worth seeing, are scarcely fit to be explored by ladies who have been brought up with the utmost delicacy and tenderness. The towns are neither beautiful nor animated; and its immense plains and muddy rivers are any thing but picturesque. Yet there is much in Hungary to interest the philosophic mind. The manners of the inhabitants have a freshness and originality about them delightful to a mind wearied with the hackneyed forms of society; and frankness and hospitality, those virtues so rare in more cultivated countries, here seem indigenous to the soil."

"But do you not think that this bewitching simplicity arises solely from ignorance of the

world; and that if Hungary were as much frequented as France and Italy, its inhabitants would become equally selfish and rapacious?" asked Seaford.

"Very possibly they might," returned the traveller; "but it seems folly to anticipate evil. The kindness of the Hungarians to strangers may be evanescent as the bloom upon the plum, but it is beautiful whilst it lasts, and woe be to the rude hand that should attempt prematurely to destroy it."

So saying, he rose, and would have retired, but Seaford stopped him; "Stay," said he, "we part not thus, my friend. This is my wedding-day, and I do not think I can commemorate it better than by making a fellow-creature happy. What my wife gave you can only supply your immediate wants; but this (giving him a pocket book) will be of longer duration; and when it is exhausted, you will find my address in England, where I will afford you a permanent home whenever you may feel inclined to seek one."

The old man stood a moment gazing upon him in silence; then, falling on his knees, whilst

tears coursed each other down his furrowed cheeks, he seized Seaford's hand, and, kissing it rapturously, invoked blessings on us both.

"Oh that I had any means of showing my gratitude," sobbed he; "it overpowers me; I cannot bear it. Do take my dog."

"No, no," said I, putting it back; "it is your only friend. I would not deprive you of it for the world."

The old man looked at the dog affectionately. "I do love it," said he. Then starting on his feet, as if struck by a sudden recollection, he began to fumble in the bosom of his coat. "You are right, madam; I believe it would break my heart to part with Fidèle, and you do not want him. But I have something here which I trust you will find worthy of your acceptance."

So saying, he drew from his bosom a large bundle of dirty paper, and laid it at my feet. I could scarcely refrain from laughing at the gravity and importance of his air; for he offered me this dingy gift with a look which seemed to say, "You are now amply repaid, and the obligation I was under is fully discharged."

As I did not like to hurt the poor fellow's feelings, I raised the filthy packet from the ground (though I was almost afraid to touch it), and found every atom of paper closely written upon.

"What is this?" asked I.

"Some of my MSS." returned the man; a glow of conscious pride flushing his care-worn cheek. "I told you, madam, that I was an author; and I now add, that, in the course of my varied wanderings, I have met with many strange adventures, which I have embodied in tales. Every year I have written four; which I have regularly concealed in a place of security, which no torments shall ever force me to disclose till the fitting time comes for them to meet the public eye, when they shall blaze forth with dazzling refulgence, and bestow fame and immortality upon even the frail and emaciated being who now stands before you."

The old man's figure seemed to dilate as he spoke, and his eyes absolutely flashed fire. I was astonished, and really determined to read what he had given me, out of respect to his en-

thusiasm. He soon recovered himself, and, apparently ashamed of his unwonted emotion, continued with more calmness, "These are the fruits of my labours during the last year, and I do not think that I can dispose of them better than by laying them at your feet."

"I accept your kindness most gratefully. Be assured that I shall have great delight in perusing them, and that I shall value them highly."

"Promise me one thing," said the old man, wringing my hand; "I have but one thing to ask, and I shall die happy. If you do not hear any thing of me in two years, let my manuscripts be published, and tell the world in what manner you obtained them."

I promised solemnly, and the old man retired. I have never seen him since.

"This is a singular adventure, Emily," said my husband, when we were again alone; "Do you think you will be able to decypher his writing?"

"I don't know," said I, looking horror-

struck at the scrawl. "However, my maid shall try to copy them."

Accordingly, on my return to the inn, I gave the packet to Martha, directing her to employ her leisure hours in the transcription.

The next day we proceeded on our journey. The country between Presburg and Raab was extremely beautiful; but beyond that town it became flat and uninteresting. Immense plains, spreading in every direction, oppressed the mind with a sense of loneliness and desolation; and as we advanced, we seemed approaching a new world, where all was different from that which we had quitted. However, situated as we were, even this had its charm, for what did we care for outward objects, while we felt that we were all the world to each other!

It was nearly dark when we arrived at Pesth, and the soft air of Hungary threw a grey mist round its magnificent houses, which made them look like fairy palaces. The noble and regular streets of this fine city were now thronged with people, and as it happened to be the time of the great fair, we had some difficulty in obtaining a

lodging, even in the magnificent hotel of the Konig Von Ungern, though it is said to make up more than a hundred beds. We were compelled, for want of other accommodation, to sit down to the table d'hôte with a heterogeneous mixture of persons of both sexes and all nations. To amuse us while we ate, a kind of Esper George played tricks, and exhibited the manœuvres of his dog, who, by the way, was far the cleverer animal of the two. Two women performed a duet on silver Jew's harps, accompanied by a two stringed violoncello, which sounded like the bass singer in a Jewish synagogue; and lastly, a number of children mounted on stilts, performed a sort of play.

I was pleased with the novelty of the scene, and enjoyed it extremely, but Seaford was annoyed; his imperturbable composure was discomposed, and the equanimity of his temper completely ruffled. Indeed, trifles which I scarcely noticed, were to him serious evils, and I was sorry to find that his patience was not quite so conspicuous as his talents. This was rather an awkward discovery to make the se-

cond day after matrimony, though, unfortunately the circumstance was far more disagreeable than uncommon.

We were too much tired to feel inclined to survey the wonders of the fair that evening, but the following morning we walked forth to gratify our curiosity. The large square in which this motley assembly was held, was crowded with people. Hungarian peasants, with their heavy good-humoured stupidity of look, were standing by their wares without making the slightest effort to recommend them, whilst their loose jackets trimmed with fur, and their long hair hanging over their shoulders, gave them a most picturesque appearance. The dress of the women was equally singular; their tight vests were fastened down the front with glittering buttons, and their short petticoats of the most glaring colours, displayed the whole of the red morocco hessian boots, which covered their enormous legs nearly to the knee.

Behind these peasants was an enclosed space surrounded by a barricado formed of the empty waggons and cars which had come to the fair

loaded with merchandize, and which now, tilted up, were thus arranged to prevent the escape of the wild horses which the Hungarians had brought for sale; and which were bound in every possible direction, by broad thongs made of the untanned hides of cattle.

A picturesque group of Cygani, or Gipsies, next caught my attention, and these savage wild-looking people were, some singing wild melodies to their guitars, and some revealing the high secrets of destiny to the simple peasants, who stood listening with open mouths to the wonders that they heard.

On one side a charlatan displayed surprising feats of legerdemain; and on the other an ambulatory theatre delighted the eyes of the admiring multitude by the adroitness and coarse wit of a wandering Pagliazzo, or speaking harlequin, whose jokes were received with enthusiastic applause. Here some vagrant Italians exhibited the well-known Signor Policinel in all his glory: and there some substantial Germans performed the equally hackneyed adventures of the celebrated Don Juan, metamor-

phosed into a fat German; whilst the devils, who, at the end of both pieces, carried away the heroes, partook of the characters of their respective nations. The German demon being a dull heavy-looking gnome, who could only remind one of the ghost of a defunct coal-heaver; whilst the Italian was a merry, active, mischief-loving imp, full of fun and frolick, and in short, a fit representative of the fairy Robin Goodfellow.

An immense number of Jews, diligently plying their several avocations, were scattered through the long lines of booths, which spread in all directions. The marked physiognomy of this singular people, contrast strikingly with that of the sly Croatians, the indolent Turks, the phlegmatic Germans, and the crafty Italians. All, however, were busily employed in nearly the same pursuit; that is, in exchanging the merchandize they brought, for that which they were in need of.

The scene was beautiful in the extreme. Behind us rose the noble city of Pesth, its superb buildings of polished stone glittering in the sun.

Around spread immense plains, through which flowed the sweeping Danube, looking in the distance like a silver riband floating in the air. At the extreme edge of the horizon might be discovered the faint outline of mountains, melting into the soft grey sky; whilst immediately before us, though on the other side of the river, the fortress of Buda reared its stately head, looking down, as though with proud contempt, upon the busy crowd beneath. The bridge of boats which separated the two cities, was thronged with human beings, in every possible variety of costume, who appeared walking on the water, the slender line which supported them being quite hidden by the immensity of the crowd.

We crossed this singular bridge, and entering Buda, ascended to the esplanade, from which we commanded a full view of the busy scene beneath, together with one of the most magnificent prospects I ever beheld. I was enchanted.

“Oh! Seaford,” cried I, “this is a lovely world!”

“Happiness makes it so,” said he; “with those we love, a desert would seem paradise.”

“I believe that happiness depends more upon ourselves than upon external objects; and yet these objects do sometimes influence us. Do you remember last night? You were with *me*, and yet, you did not seem to enjoy your supper room.”

“That was because other, and vulgar persons were present; had we been alone, that vile room, with its bare benches and sanded floor, would have appeared an apartment in a palace.”

“Oh, my dear Seaford! enthusiastic lovers ought not even to see bare benches and sanded floors; I am afraid you are not quite so far gone as you fancy yourself.”

“It was for you only that I suffered; love makes us sensitive, and I could not bear that you, even for an instant, should mix with persons so beneath you.”

“Travellers must not think of trifles, remember that we are incog., and that we left our dignity behind us at Vienna. With my aunt I

suppose, and I am sure it could not be in better hands ; she will take excellent care of it."

"I declare Emily you have quite vexed me by seeming to think that *I* was annoyed by our miserable accommodations last night. I assure you that I never think of myself, it was entirely on your account that I was uneasy ; such trifles have not the smallest influence upon me."

"*Voila M. le philosophe !*"

"I can bear your raillery, for I really do pique myself upon the name of philosopher. I *am* a lover of wisdom, for such is the meaning of the Greek words from which the term philosopher is compounded, and can there be a more exalted title ? No, there cannot ; and as the love of a pure and divine object elevates the mind, and raises it above all paltry feelings, so does the adoration of wisdom free her votaries from all annoyances, that is, from unworthy, or insignificant annoyances. I repeat, that for myself, I am perfectly indifferent to personal comforts, and I could sleep as well on a heap of straw in a hovel, as on a bed of down in a palace." I shivered, and Seaford, folding his cloak

round me to preserve me from the cold, proposed that we should instantly return to our inn.

On recrossing the fair, I was struck with the great number of aged people that were amongst the rest. In one place ten or twelve, all appearing above a hundred years of age, were sitting under the shade of a tilted waggon (so placed as to form a kind of tent), surrounded by their descendants, some as far removed, I was told, as the sixth generation, all eating water melons and other fruits with the same glee, and all laughing with equal earnestness at the tricks of a *Quacksalber*, or *Pagliazzo*, who happened to be near them.

When we reached our inn, the fame of our consequence, which Leopold, Seaford's valet, had taken care to spread, secured us a private room and a decent dinner; which, *entre nous*, my philosophic spouse enjoyed much more than I.

The following morning our carriage was ordered at an early hour, to proceed into the interior; for, though I suspect my *caro sposo* had seen quite enough of the *delices a'Hongrie*, from time immemorial the caprices of a young

bride have always been attended to, and I was determined to go on, as I had heard that there was a town in Hungary where there were eight hundred bootmakers, only one bookseller, and no lawyer ! “ *Mon Dieu ! Ces Hongeriens doivent être les bons gens !* ” cried I, and I never rested till we were on the road to visit this miraculous city.

The first stage or two, presented nothing particular ; but as we advanced the scene changed ; and one morning when we descended to the carriage I shrank back with horror at the appearance of our steeds. Such horses ! they looked as if a single whisk of their tails would entirely annihilate our elegant English carriage ; and the postillions were fierce, savage-looking fellows, with jack-boots large enough to hold their wives and families. Both men and horses indeed seemed tremendous exaggerations of the very worst of their species in either France or Germany ; and they were all so big, that I rubbed my eyes, half fancying that I had a pair of magnifying spectacles on. Every thing looked gigantic, the carriage certainly excepted, which appeared

by comparison actually made of wafers. Seaford handed me in, and we set off at a pace which reminded me of Bürger's Leonora :

Then helter skelter off they go,
Unheeding wet or dry ;
The horse and rider snort and blow,
The sparkling pebbles fly.

The roads were intolerable, and to a fanciful mind our unfortunate carriage seemed sighing and groaning at the ills which it was forced to undergo ; for at every jolt the springs creaked, and the pannels stretched like the straining of a ship at sea ; and really we could scarcely have been shaken more, if we had been actually tossed about on the tempestuous ocean. Still we were dragged on, through thick and thin, the poor carriage whirling along like a balloon in a gale of wind. At length we stopped to change horses, and such creatures as were brought to us ! *Mon Dieu !* what language can describe them. Just caught from the fields, soiled with earth and every kind of filth, with shaggy hair like Newfoundland dogs, and heels like a lion's mane, I shudder at the recollection.

With this reinforcement we again set forward.

on our journey, and it was not till the sun was near setting that we saw anything resembling the mountain, which we were told would distinguish the town where we were to sleep; and when at last a gentle acclivity appeared at the edge of the horizon, it was so slight as scarcely to deserve the name. We were, however, aware that in level countries the slightest eminences are called hills, and we of course supposed that this must be the object of our search. It was too far to reach that night; and seeing a pretty looking village at a little distance, we directed our postillions to drive thither, intending to sleep there, and go on the following morning. The men muttered something in a horribly barbarous dialect, which we really could not understand, and then they sullenly obeyed. We had not proceeded far, however, before we fully comprehended the meaning of their hesitation; the road became tremendous, at one moment our elegant vehicle was raised almost to the skies, then violently depressed; now one wheel ascended far above its companions, and then another, whilst the ambition of the former was

sunk low in mud. During these interesting evolutions I watched the countenance of my philosophic husband, as well as the rapidly fading light would allow, and I own I was amused to see the difficulty he had to restrain his temper. He did, however, refrain till we reached the village, and stopped at the principal inn, when he involuntarily ejaculated, "Thank God."

We descended, and were ushered into a large room with a clay floor; a considerable quantity of straw was spread in a corner, and some pine logs blazed on the open hearth; a number of wild looking people, who had been sitting round this fire, rose at our entrance, and gathered about us, with such strange gestures and frightful cries that I was terrified, and clung closely to my husband for protection.

"*Salve! salve Domine!*" cried they, simultaneously; "*Salve Domina! salvete!*" and one of them attempted to take my cloak. I shrank back with horror.

"*Vah! tu sapis nimium,*" cried the host, bustling through the crowd, and pushing the fellow away, "*Quando prandetis, Domine?*"

continued he, bowing, and showing some blackened and greasy hams hanging in the smoke of the chimney.

Seaford and I both turned away in disgust. "Can we have a bed?" asked he, abruptly.

"*Imo*," returned the host, "*bonus lectus*," and advancing towards the straw, he pointed to it, declaring, in doggrel Latin, that it was quite fresh, and had never been slept upon but once!

We looked at each other in dismay, and bitterly regreted that we had not taken the advice of the host and hostess of the Konig Von Ungern, at Pesth, which, we had fancied dictated by selfish motives; and refrained from penetrating into the interior, until we had provided ourselves with every possible accommodation which travellers could want in a desert country.

"What shall we do?" asked Seaford; "We must go on; it is impossible to remain here?"

I shook my head.

"Surely," continued he, indignantly, "you would not sleep on such a bed as that!"

"Can't we pass the night in the carriage?"

“Impossible. There is a dreadful fog, and your health is so delicate, we must return. Even if we are forced to travel all night on the high road, the air will be purer than in this vile hole!”

I thought it not pretty for a bride to be obstinate, so I bowed obedience. The postillions were not so amiable. They vowed they would not stir without rest; and the horses partook of their firmness, for they stood as immoveable as though they had been carved of rock; no fresh ones were to be procured, and there was no other inn in the place. Seafood tried in vain to overcome their resolution; flattery, and even gold produced no effect, till at last he recollected he had an order from the nobleman, whose estates he was traversing, to secure attention. The effect of this paper was magical, and no firman from the Turkish Divan ever produced more implicit obedience. The host was instantly quieted, and the postillions bowed and mounted, with great difficulty, persuading their jaded horses to advance.

The scene was to me both novel and striking;

indeed, I was not before aware that the feudal system, which was so long the disgrace and bane of Europe, was still so devoutly preserved in Hungary. It there exists, however, in almost its pristine glory; the peasant regards his lord with an eye of awe and veneration; he considers him as a superior being, whom it is his duty to obey, and, I believe, thinks nobility a sort of intermediate state between men and angels. I remember that afterwards, when speaking to an Hungarian woman of Prince Esterhazy, she asked me, in the hyperbolic idiom of her country, whether "my eyes had been ever blessed by the light of his countenance!" and she called Prince Lichenstein "the *sun* of his peasantry."

Our forced march was exceedingly disagreeable, our progress was very slow; it was quite dark, and the tired horses could scarcely drag the carriage through the great ruts; still Seaford would go on, till a sudden jolt stopped us altogether. The springs broke, in fact the carriage split *in twain* (as they say in the old romances), and both Seaford and I were thrown out with violence. I fainted, it being my first

appearance in that character, and when I recovered, I found myself stretched beside my bleeding husband, on the very bed of straw which we had both, a short time before, so cordially despised.

The scene was striking: all the wild fierce looking men had disappeared, and we were only attended by the weeping Martha, and an immensely tall woman, who was boiling something in a myterious locking cauldron, over the red flaring fire, and waving herself to and fro, muttering incantations all the time. She was a living personification of Meg Merrilies, only taller and more masculine. As she spread her red bony hands to the fire, they seemed to my fevered imagination like the enormous claws of demons, such as I have seen them represented in old pictures, dragging down unfortunate sinners to the infernal regions. I never saw a more hideous creature; I should think she must have been full seven feet high, and her dry, bony arms, as she frequently raised them above her head and then let them fall again, looked

like the levers of an immense steam-engine made red hot.

She was one of the Cygani, or wandering Gipsies, and being considered the leech of the tribe, was really muttering a charm whilst she prepared a poultice to dress my husband's wounds. His groans, indeed, soon attracted all my attention to himself; and my agony was unspeakable, when I found that his leg was broken, and that he had received a severe cut upon the head. Oh! how bitterly did I then lament the foolish whim that had made me wish to take this unfortunate journey; and how sincerely I vowed, that no consideration should ever again make me capricious. My vows, however, were now too late.

When the Gipsev had finished her incantation, she put the mess to cool, and then approached my husband, singing a kind of magic song; she knelt by his side, and then, with the dexterity of an experienced practitioner, she proceeded to set the leg. I shrieked for the pain which I saw him suffer, and was quite incapable of affording the least assistance, but Martha be-

haved like a little heroine; the old Gipsej was pleased, and patting her cheek, called her "*Bonna puella!*" Then it was, that all the misery of our situation rushed upon my mind. Martha was totally ignorant of Latin; I knew only a few words of it, and no one near us spoke or understood any other language, excepting the barbarous Hungarian. My husband was incapable of giving us any aid, and Leopold was gone to the nearest town in search of medical assistance. Never before did I feel so utterly desolate, and I wept in the bitterness of my heart. Little Martha, however, was a host in herself, and by dint of her indefatigable exertions she contrived in a short time to make us tolerably comfortable; she found, in some out-house, a kind of wooden settle, which had been used as the foundation of a stack of buckwheat. This she had brought into the kitchen, and whilst it was drying by the fire, she sewed a long piece of linen together, and stuffing it with chaff, and the dried leaves of the Indian corn, managed to make a sort of bed. Seaford was then carefully laid upon it; and I, doubly

a Countess, and born to enormous wealth, felt the most ecstatic rapture I had ever experienced in my life, when I saw my husband, a British Earl, laid on this homely couch.

He was now comparatively easy, for the Gipsey was a skilful surgeon, and he fell into a gentle sleep, whilst I watched in a rustic chair, supplied by the industrious Martha, with a cushion formed of the same materials as the bed. Martha now showed her talents as a cook, and soon prepared a boiled chicken, to tempt me to eat. I could not refuse her kindness, and in spite of all my troubles, a glow of happiness warmed my heart at her devoted affection. Indeed I had ample reason to bless the Baron's valet, and his opportune *liaison* with Smith.

When Leopold returned with an English physician, whom he luckily found at Buda, that gentleman approved of what the Gipsey had done; and when he was compelled to leave us, he recommended us not to call in any other medical attendant. Seaford, who felt grateful for the relief the woman had afforded him, gladly promised obedience, and I had no will but his.

Accordingly, all that remained was to make ourselves as comfortable as possible in our humble abode, and wealth soon effected such an alteration that, after the visit of an upholsterer from Pesth, the old Gipsev, regarded us almost with fear, for she verily believed the change had been worked solely by magic, and that my husband and myself could, if we had pleased to wave our enchanted wands, have transformed the hut into a palace the very moment that we entered it.

Seaford was naturally impatient, and in spite of his boasted philosophy, he found his slow progress towards convalescence very tedious. I too, *entre nous*, was beginning to suffer from ennui, when our guardian angel in the form of little Martha reminded us of the MSS. of the strange old man whom we had met at Presburg. We were both delighted at the idea, and Martha bringing me the tales, transcribed in a fair plain hand, I began to read as follows.

THE MYSTIC.

THE MYSTIC.

CHAPTER I.

“ Behold ! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold !
See all but man with unearn’d pleasure gay !
See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
Broke from her wint’ry tomb, in pride of May,
What youthful bride can equal her array ?

Who can with her for easy pleasure vie ?
From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
Is all she hath to do beneath the sky.
All can enjoy save man, and man alone :
But withering passions turn *his* heart to stone.”

“ Good morrow, Signor Bernardi,” said a tall, pale, Italian, to a fat, good-humoured looking man, who was standing upon the quay at Trieste, so intently engaged in watching the approach of a richly-laden merchant-vessel, that he did not hear the salutation addressed to him till it had been repeated thrice.

“Good morrow, Signor Veroni. I beg your pardon; I declare I did not hear you. The Lord Byron sails well, doesn’t she?”

“Yes; like her noble namesake, she proudly breasts the waves, and seems determined to rise superior to all oppression.”

“I declare I am glad to see her safe in port. I was afraid those cursed Greeks —”

“Gently, Signor, if you please: I cannot hear you abuse the Greeks. I have embraced their cause with all my heart and soul, and I am ready to sacrifice both life and fortune, if necessary, to aid their glorious struggles for independence.”

“Struggles for nonsense! I own I was surprised, Signor, the other day, to hear you, who, in our mercantile transactions have shown yourself a man of sense, talk such stuff. The Greeks are not fit for independence. I know them well, and have bought my knowledge pretty dearly. They are a set of sly, rascally, hypocritical scoundrels, famous for nothing but telling lies and cheating; two accomplishments in which, to

do them justice, I verily believe the devil himself could not equal them."

"I am sorry to find a worthy man so prejudiced. Indeed I did not think any one, in these enlightened days, could be found bold enough to assert that the descendants of Solon and Lycurgus are unfit for independence."

"There's a specimen of the advantages people derive from learning. They get hold of a number of fine words, which they do not understand the meaning of, and which only serve to cloud their judgments and bewilder their understandings. I remember, when you were secretary to the late Count Mancini —"

Veroni frowned. "I am not now a secretary," said he. "Indeed it was only unavoidable misfortune which reduced me ever to sully my noble blood by accepting so dependent a situation. Though, correctly speaking, my situation could scarcely be called dependent, as the late Count always treated me as a friend, and never undertook any enterprise of importance without consulting me."

“People do say that he consulted you rather too often,” muttered Bernardi, half aside. Then raising his voice, he continued: “I really did not mean to offend you, Signor. But to return to the Greeks: I own it does put me in a passion when I hear people going on in a canting strain about them, and stopping my mouth, when I complain of a rascally merchant who has cheated me of three hundred piastres, with a long Fairy-Morgana-story of Leonidas and his Spartans. What the deuce have they to do with the modern Greeks? You might as well compare the English in the reign of George the Third with their Saxon ancestors, who drank wine out of the skulls of their enemies; or the aboriginal Britons, who went naked, and burnt men alive for sacrifices.”

“Prejudice is unconquerable.”

“That is very true: however, I cannot stay to reason upon the subject now, for you see the ship has made the port, and I must go and examine her bill of lading.”

“Stay, Bernardi; I have something important to communicate to you.”

“It must be another time, then, for business must be attended to. Come this evening to my villa, and over a glass of Chios wine I’ll hear any thing.”

So saying he bustled away, leaving Veroni to slowly perambulate the beach; and, if he felt inclined, to sigh his regrets for his native country across the gulf that divided him from it. The Adriatic lay sleeping at his feet,

Calm as an unweaned child ; —

and the beach was studded with small silvery shells, which looked like fairy gems. Innumerable sails shone in dazzling brightness on the still bosom of the glassy sea; some were spread, to woo eagerly the languid breeze, and others hung lazily, as though sleeping upon their masts. Veroni turned impatiently from this scene of calm and tranquil beauty, and looked towards the town. Its spacious quays were crowded with merchants from all parts of the globe, and a busy, bustling hum murmured from its streets. Beyond this rose the splendid villas of the rich burghers, the snowy whiteness of their marble colonnades contrasting vividly

with the clear blue sky, and the verdure of the groves which surrounded them, and clothed the gently sloping hill that lay behind.

Veroni, however, was insensible to the magic of the prospect. Indeed its very loveliness seemed to mock the war of passions which convulsed his bosom; and his mind was in a state of such strong, and almost morbid excitement, that he could not bear to gaze upon a picture of happiness. He gazed till he felt maddened at the sight, and involuntarily he gnashed his teeth with rage, as the sea-birds flew by him, now wheeling in the air, and now darting towards the clear, bright water, in pursuit of prey.

“These creatures are happy,” muttered he: “for they are satisfied with their condition; their bodily wants are fulfilled, and they seek no more. Man, man alone, is cursed with hopes that he cannot define, and desires which he can never gratify. Why are such fatal passions implanted in the human breast? Why are mocking fiends permitted to offer to our grasp the blessings that we pant for, and yet to withdraw them at the very moment of fruition? We

see, but cannot obtain. Why are our eyes opened, if only to increase our misery? and why are we allowed to fancy glories which we can never reach? Oh! that I could be as those birds, satisfied with my lot, and free from the anxious wishes that still torment me: but I was born ambitious; a never-dying rage for greatness gnaws at my heart, and now that I have perilled soul and body in the cause, it is no longer time to waver — I must go on."

Whilst Veroni thus muttered, and paced the beach with hurried steps, he was so absorbed in his own reflections, that he almost ran against a tall, handsome man, who was coming to meet him.

"Well, Veroni," said the stranger, smiling, "you seem lost in meditation. Have you spoken to Bernardi?"

"He was engaged; but I am to see him this evening. I had no time this morning to enter upon the subject; but, though he only spoke to me for five minutes, he contrived to mention your brother, Count Rodolph."

"Pshaw!" returned the Count, "keep to

the present business. Remember, that though I would spare no expense to induce him to take her, you must not offer too much. Bernardi is a cunning old fox, and would ruin us, if he were to suspect any thing."

"Do not fear—I will manage him; but Agnes is so giddy and so obstinate that I dread —"

"Dread nothing from her; Agnes has strength of mind enough to do any thing, that she sees an adequate motive for, and her gaiety will be a cloak. Besides, she knows nothing which it can seriously injure us to disclose."

"That is the best security when one would depend upon a woman's secrecy," muttered Veroni; and the friends walked together towards the town.

The villa of Bernardi was situated on the sloping hill before alluded to, and was built in the Italian style, with a deep veranda projecting from its walls, the trellis-work belonging to which was covered with vines, and flowering plants, whose fragrance perfumed the air. Bernardi was a Piedmontese Protestant, who had been driven from his native country by religious per-

secution, and, with his wife and infant son, had sought refuge at Trieste. His wife did not live long in exile, and his son being soon after entered as a student at Gräatz, Bernardi, who was still young, unfortunately for himself, determined to take a second helpmate, and for this purpose he selected the rich heiress of a French Jew. The lady, who was upon the awful verge of old maidism, when he made her an offer, gladly accepted him; though, having become a Roman Catholic on the death of her father, she, with the fervour of all new converts, devoutly hated her heretic husband and son-in-law for their religion, almost as soon as the marriage ceremony was concluded. Bernardi was indifferent to this: he had married her for her wealth; and as he did not find that deceive him, he was satisfied. Indeed, he had good reason to be so, as he employed it so well in his mercantile pursuits, and it enabled him to make such judicious speculations, that he soon became one of the richest men in Trieste. In prosperity, as well as adversity, however, Bernardi was always good-humoured, and his physiognomy was an exact

index to his mind ; for every one who saw him felt convinced that his round, rosy face, and little sparkling black eyes, could not belong to an ill-tempered man ; and that his portly figure could only have been nourished by content. Contented, indeed, he always was, though the very day of his conference with Veroni he found employment for all his philosophy. The Lord Byron had detained him so long with her numerous attractions, that he was too late for dinner, and what wife's patience can stand such a test.

“ So, Signor Bernardi,” said the enraged lady, the moment her unfortunate husband came within earshot, for, like a dutiful and affectionate wife, she was waiting his arrival at the door, “ So, Sir, you are too late, as usual. The dinner has been waiting full forty minutes ! Yesterday it was only twenty-nine minutes and a half, and the day before sixteen ; so you are improving rapidly, you see. Will you never abandon these vile courses ? You think to blind me ; but I know the cause of your behaviour from the very bottom. Oh ! I am a miserable woman ! Look at me, base man, and deny it if you can.

Didn't I see you with my own eyes hand a lady out of your warehouse this very morning, and didn't I hear you say at the same time that you would not come back till *she* came in? What *she* could a virtuous husband be thinking of excepting his own wife?—his own gentle, constant, and affectionate wife! I say, I'm sure *you* have no business to think of any other. However, I watch you—I see all your baseness. I am close at hand when you don't think it. You have fifty disguises, and I have found you out in all, you inhuman, base, barbarous, cruel, deceitful man!”

Here the lady stopped for want of breath; and Bernardi, shrugging his shoulders, exclaimed, “Just like the upsetting of a cart of stones, by Jupiter!”

“What's that you say?” cried the Signora, suddenly checking her tears. “Am I always to be the butt of your insulting remarks? Am I everlastingly to bear your gibes and sneers? But I won't submit to it—I won't endure it—I'll sue for a divorce.”

“I wish you would, with all my heart, my

dear; but, alas! I'm afraid that there's no hope of that; so I believe we may as well sit down to dinner."

"No hope! no hope, indeed! But you may well say no hope; for, now I think of it, I am determined to live with you, if it's only to torment you."

With this dutiful resolution Signora Bernardi led the way to the dining-room.

"I never saw such a man in my life," said she, after sitting some time in silent sulkiness, whilst her husband ate heartily of every thing before him; "you never seem vexed at any thing."

"Why should I? When I am prosperous I have no reason to be sad; and when I am unlucky, I have more need to keep up my spirits."

"You are the most provoking, barbarous, cruel"——

"Eat something, my dear. Depend upon it, 'tis not wholesome to quarrel fasting. After dinner we shall be all alive, and I shall be able to give your little interesting remarks all the attention they deserve: at present my head is quite full of soup and ragouts; to say nothing of

that excellent dish of sour krout, which could not have been better if it had been dressed for the table of the Emperor himself."

"Infamous! Am I to be made a jest of?"

"By no means, *mia carissima*. I never was more in earnest in my life. A good dinner is a very good thing, let me tell you; and when it is moistened with good wine" —

The Signora could bear no more. She snatched the glass out of her husband's hands, and dashed the contents in his face, breaking a small bottle, which stood by his plate of *liqueur, en passant*.

"Socrates and Xantippe," said Bernardi, coolly wiping his forehead, and his clothes, which were deluged with the costly *liqueur*. "This *Lachrymæ Christi* is very sticky."

"Signor Bernardi, you will drive me mad."

"It would be difficult, I think, to make you worse than you are already, my dear."

"My servants complain of my temper, but they little know the provocations I have to undergo."

"As to your servants, my love, I am only surprised that you can ever get any to live with you."

“ I never find fault without occasion.”

“ Indeed, my dear, you wrong yourself, for I verily believe you generally scold only to keep your grondatory organs in order: indeed, people do say, that you storm at the chairs and tables when there is nobody at home but yourself.”

Signora Bernardi could not endure this, and she flew out of the room, almost overturning Veroni, whom she encountered at the door.

“ You must certainly be in love, Signor,” said Bernardi, smiling, “ for you are at least two hours sooner than I expected.”

“ And is love the only thing that you think can inspire extraordinary expedition ? ”

“ It is generally reckoned so. Indeed, I remember when I was in love myself.” —

“ With your present wife ? ”

“ Oh ! no, poor creature ! I certainly never was in love with her. She ’s an antidote to love. We had just been having a breeze when you came in. She is a perfect Xantippe.”

“ I know it, and only wonder how you can endure such a domestic torment. She would drive me distracted. Why don’t you get divorced ? ”

“ I do think of it sometimes ; but I owe the old woman some gratitude, for it was the use of her fortune that has made me what I am. Besides, I’m used to her ; and I really think I should feel quite lonely if I did not hear the music of her sweet voice. Hark ! she is now correcting the servants in a tone several degrees higher than that of a Turkish mollah calling the hour of prayers from a minaret.”

“ I have heard of a retired drummer who could not live without the sound of his drum ; and who, when rendered incapable by age, used to hire a person to beat it to him. So I am not *much* surprised at what you say. However, we will now, if you please, leave the Signora in peace.”

“ Not in peace.”

“ In war, then—colloquial war, at any rate. You have just mentioned the Turks, and by so doing have reminded me of the subject upon which I wish to speak to you ; upon which, indeed, I wish to consult you.”

“ I hope to God you don’t want me to join the Greeks ; if you do, I tell you beforehand, that I

will have nothing to do with them. Let the rich English fill their newspapers with their subscriptions, or rather with the amount of the sums which *they say* they have subscribed (for I have never heard of the money anywhere but in their newspapers) ; and let their disbanded soldiers and patriotic lords fly to the relief of the Greek pirates, if they like—I have no objection. It is all very well if they have nothing better to do, and it may keep them out of mischief at home. Nay, I give them leave, if they have a mind, to preach on the subject in their Houses of Parliament whenever they have nothing more important to talk about. It is a pretty subject for oratory ; as a man may show his learning in prating of the ancient Greeks, and his ingenuity in finding some good qualities in the modern ones (for he must be ingenious, if he really does find any), all which sounds well in declamation : but it would be absolute madness for a sober-minded citizen such as I am, to trouble my head about their quarrel, particularly as I have had a peep behind the scenes, and know what they are all about. I should be as mad as Don Quixote,

when he cut off the Emperor's head in the puppet-show. Indeed, it is my firm opinion that the Greeks cannot be made independent; and that if you take them from the Turks, it will be only to throw them into the hands of some other nation. Their minds are so thoroughly debased that they can NOT be enlightened."

"You are unreasonable Signor, if you complain that the Greeks have acquired the vices of slavery; and yet wish them to remain quiescent under their oppressors. I allow that they are cunning and deceitful, for tyranny has made them so; but, if you remove the cause, the effect will vanish also. Give the Greeks freedom, and they will become worthy of being free men."

"Not this generation, I fancy. When men have been once degraded, and their minds brutalized, nothing short of an enchanter's wand can restore their proper tone. Your theory sounds very well, yet still it is only a theory. It is easy to say remove the cause, and the effect will follow, but every day's experience contradicts the fact; for every day we see effects

continue long after the original causes for them have ceased. Only fancy the situation of the Greeks if the Turkish power were overthrown. What would they do with their freedom? They have been so long instruments in the hands of others, that they are incapable of governing themselves; petty jealousies, fruitless struggles, and unmeaning plots, would occupy their whole time. They have been so long used to scheming, that it has become as necessary to them as their daily food; and, for want of tyrants to plot against, they would intrigue among themselves. Whilst they were thus occupied, the first foreign power, who thought them worth seizing, might step in, making his ground good, whilst they were debating who should be their leader to oppose him; mutual jealousies would paralyze their efforts, (and, by the way, the Greeks at best are poor soldiers;) and, *presto*, they would again be slaves, with no other result from their short-lived freedom, than that of having changed their masters; and, like the fox in the fable, got a fresh set of flies to suck them."

"It is useless attempting to argue with you,

but *I* think that the elastic spirit of the Greeks, though for a while it may be depressed, will, like the palm-tree of the desert, only fly back with more vigour, when its unnatural restraint shall be removed."

"I know where you learnt that simile. The Count your late master—but, I beg your pardon, I had forgotten that was a tender subject."

Veroni's brow grew dark as night. "It was not to talk of my late *friend* the Count Mancini that I came here. I am about to join the Greeks, Signor Bernardi, and for this purpose I have arranged all my affairs, save one—"

He paused. Bernardi did not speak, as he waited for his companion to proceed. A silence of considerable length ensued, during which Veroni nearly filled his tumbler with wine, and drank it off hastily. He was evidently endeavouring to assume a composure which he did not feel. At length he spoke.

"I believe you are an honest man, Bernardi."

"I hope so."

"And a discreet one."

“ Of that I am not quite so certain.”

“ I have a daughter.”

“ A daughter ! I did not before know you had been married,” said Bernardi, drily.

“ It is a long story,” returned his guest, in a hurried manner, gulping down more wine. “ I have not time to tell it now. Suffice it to say, that I have a daughter, and that when I go to Greece, I know not what I shall do with her. Will you take her under your charge ? She shall have a handsome pension.”

“ I do not know what to say to it. How old is she ?

“ Fifteen, and as beautiful as an angel.”

“ My dear fellow, do you know what you are asking ? My wife is a very devil for jealousy ; and jealous wives have very seldom any *penchant* for beautiful angels of fifteen ; besides which, you know I have a son, tall, melancholy, and romantic ; just the thing for a hero, who delights in writing sonnets to the moon, and passes half his time in fits of abstraction. He is sure to fall in love with her, even if I do not. So, you see, she is likely to make a pretty commotion in the fa-

mily ! Ernest, indeed, will be very likely to run away with her."

"I must brave it all," said Veroni, smiling. "Nay, I think, I ought to be glad if such were to be the result. You are rich, Bernardi, and I could give my daughter something handsome; so, perhaps, neither might do better. Besides which, a motherless girl is always much better married than single, and I think your son would make her a good husband. I was much pleased with him the last time I was at the villa."

"Aye, aye, when he was talking so enthusiastically about the Greeks. The fellow is an enthusiast in every thing, and he had got hold of some nonsencical notions about liberty and freedom, and emancipation, which he did not understand, and so, of course, contrived to talk fluently of. Depend upon it orators should never think of what they are saying; as long as they confine themselves to words they will do very well, but ideas are ticklish things to meddle with, and, as soon as they begin to think, they begin to flounder."

Veroni laughed. "With such notions you

ought to turn professor of rhetoric. You would find plenty of scholars."

"I am afraid not, for most orators practise my art without teaching. By the way, I think, you never saw my son before; he is but just returned from the University at Gräatz. He's a fine youth, isn't he? Not like one of the wild Bürchen of Leipsic or Jëna; but a prudent, sensible, good-hearted young man, who will make a good citizen, and a respectable master of a family."

"I do not doubt it in the least; how could he be otherwise with such a father? I hope Agnes may please him; and, if she should, as I said before, I shall not object to their union; nor need you, for her portion will be considerable."

"Well, as you do not fear my son, I believe I must run the risk of falling in love with her myself, and so agree to your proposal."

"But the Signora Bernardi, will she approve?"

"Oh she must bear it as well as she can; and even if she should fume like a half extin-

guished volcano, I am not sure that I shall not enjoy the fun."

A silence ensued, during which both parties appeared entirely occupied with their own thoughts.

"You will find my daughter quite a child," said Veroni; "she knows nothing of the world."

"So much the better: I like natural characters. The fine ladies of the present day have so much parade and nonsense about them, they are quite intolerable. I can't endure them."

Another pause.

"Where is the young lady?" asked Bernardi.

"At Trieste, I hope, by this time; but she has been at a school in Paris since she was five years old, till within this last month."

And, as he spoke, Veroni, in a bungling attempt to hide his confusion, began to pour out some coffee which had been left on the table, when the enraged Signora, after sipping half a cup, and a glass of *liqueur*, had vanished in a rage.

"What are you doing?" cried Bernardi, "it is quite cold. Shall I order some fresh?"

“ No, no, thank you, I was thinking of something else. I am afraid you will find my poor girl very giddy, Bernardi.”

“ Oh ! we shall make allowances.”

After sitting a short time longer, lost in a profound reverie, Veroni rose abruptly, and took his leave.

“ What can the man mean ? ” thought Bernardi. “ I suppose the girl is illegitimate ; but what of that, she is not the first, and I dare say she will not be the last.”

With this philosophic reflection Signor Bernardi went to break the matter to his wife. He found her much more tractable than he had expected. Avarice, next to jealousy, was her predominating passion, and though she had everything that she could even fancy she wanted, the prospect of a handsome addition to her income, would have reconciled her to the intrusion of a whole boarding-school of misses.

“ I shall quite enjoy the young lady’s society,” said she ; “ and no doubt we shall soon become warmly attached to each other.”

“Humph !” replied Bernardi, shrugging his shoulders.

“Then my wish to oblige you ——”

“Humph !”

“And the pleasure of forming the manners and polishing the taste of an unsophisticated innocent.”

“My dear, one of the sages of old said, ‘it was possible to say too much even of a good thing,’ and I am quite of his opinion.”

“You are a perfect brute.”

“Thank you, my love.” And the matrimonial dialogue was at an end.

CHAPTER II.

—Not moulded for the selfish world ;
Too lofty, and too full of heavenly fire,
E'er to be measured by ungifted minds,
Whom glory hath not raised.

ROBERT MONTGOMERY.

BERNARDI'S family were all assembled in their usual sitting-room the following morning, anxiously expecting the arrival of their new inmate, and speculating on the appearance and manners she might possess. The ideas of each were different upon this subject, and the Signora had pictured to herself a school-girl, whom she fancied she might direct as she pleased.

“Mademoiselle Veroni will be quite a treasure to me in the way of work I expect,” said she, uttering her thoughts involuntarily aloud : “all the French girls embroider lace beautifully, and I have some lovely English net.”

“Good Heavens!” cried Bernardi, “you cannot surely suppose that a young lady, who pays handomely for her board, will work for you as a sempstress?”

“And why not? Young people ought never to be unemployed, as I tell my maids. Your son, there, would be much better doing something, than sitting idling away his time with his eyes fixed upwards, like an Indian fakir, or an English quaker. I wonder you don’t take him into your counting-house, and make him useful. It was bad enough when he had always a book in his hand, but it is worse now, for even reading was better than doing nothing. Mark my word, he’ll come to no good.”

“Pshaw!” said Bernardi, “you are talking of what you don’t understand; but that’s always the way with women. I didn’t send Ernest to the university, and give him the education he has had, to make a drudge of him when I had done. No, no, he shall never be stuck behind a desk; there are drudges enough in the world without him; but talents are rare, and as Ernest possesses these, it has been my maxim that they

should be cultivated, and so they shall be; I have got a fortune, and my son shall know how to spend one. Please God, he shall far outshine his old father, and cut a figure in the world. I only pray that I may live to see it, and then I shall die happy."

As he spoke, father Raphael, the Signora's confessor, walked into the room. The worthy monk always contriving to time his visits so well, that go where he would he was asked to dinner; an obligation which he fancied he repaid amply by giving his advice in the temporal affairs of his penitents, as well as their spiritual ones.

"*Benedicite*," said he, as he entered.

"Is not my husband in the wrong?" exclaimed the Signora, appealing to him, eagerly, "to let Ernest pass his time in idleness; and isn't he to blame to wish him to be a better man than himself? *He* has always done well."

"But I want my son to do better than well," said Bernardi. "My want of education has always been a millstone round my neck that has kept me from rising, and I was determined that Ernest should have no impediment like that to

keep him down. Thank God, he's no lack of learning, he can speak, and well too; it warmed my heart to hear him the other day about the Greeks. There was eloquence! I saw Signor Veroni look quite astonished."

"Yes, and so did our old friend Albert last week; when Ernest started up like a madman, and seized the lamp for a torch, to show how some hero set a city all in a blaze! I'm sure, for my part, I expect he'll set the house on fire some day!"

"Nonsense! It is only the youthful enthusiasm of genius; he'll get cooler as he gets older, and depend upon it he'll be the pride of his family; he'll be a great man."

"Don't set your heart upon it; I never knew any good come of idleness."

During this dialogue poor father Raphael looked first at one, and then at the other party, not daring to join either, lest he should offend the other, and he took advantage of the first pause to ask the Signor how much he expected to clear by his lately arrived vessel. This was a theme agreeable to both parties, as the Sig-

nora liked to *hear* of her husband's riches as much as he liked to talk of them, and thus both were amused, and the poor father extricated from his dilemma.

The whole conversation was quite thrown away on Ernest, for he was so absorbed in meditation that he was not even aware that any one had spoken. Ernest was the creature of romance; and, wrapt up in the wild and abstract ideas of German philosophy, his life had hitherto passed as a dream. At the university, his books were his sole companions, and at home he might be said to live alone, for he had not a single thought in common with any of the persons he associated with. Thus, shut out from society, he passed his whole time in fancying visions, which every day seemed to acquire greater intensity. A thousand forms of ideal beauty floated before his eyes, which he gazed upon till he almost forgot that they were delusions, and raised by this fancied communion with supernatural beings, it is not surprising that he found the common-place affairs of life dull and uninteresting. He was now musing

upon what he had heard of Agnes, and had already determined that she must be the kindred spirit ordained to be linked with his. "She is mine," thought he, "a part of my being ! An emanation from my sun ! Destined to unite with mine before creation her spirit doubtless pants with the same impatience as my own. Already the invisible charms of sympathy are drawing us closely together. Would that the hour were arrived, and we had met. *Had met*, oh that the awful meeting were passed ! How shall I conquer my emotion ?"

In short, Ernest was violently in love with the creature his own imagination had conjured up, and which he chose to fancy must resemble Agnes. He had long delighted to picture to himself an ideal beauty whom he could adore, for a romantic youth like Ernest could not fail to be in love ; but till now his *dulcinea* had been purely imaginary. No stretch of fancy could possibly invest the stiff reserved daughters of the rich burghers of Trieste with the charms of heroines of romance, and as yet our hero had seen no other beauties. Agnes' story was myste-

rious, her age interesting, and her beauty, from what he heard, angelic. What more could he desire? Nothing; all the materials were at hand, and when mingled together, he formed from them a splendid picture which was being heightened every instant. The distant sound of wheels, interrupted his meditations; he listened; the noise became louder, and his heart throbbed violently.

“There they are, I declare,” said the Signora, as a travelling carriage rapidly approached the villa.

“Then your doubts will soon be satisfied as to the young Lady’s working capabilities,” remarked her husband. “She is very handsome,” continued he, after a short pause; “she has a beautiful profile.”

“Thanks be to the blessed virgin if she’s a Catholic,” said father Raphael.

“Bravo, father!” cried Bernardi; “I admire your taste, and think you are quite right to wish such a pretty penitent.

“The devil often makes use of beauty as an allurement to sin,” began the father, “and for

that reason ——” but ere he could explain his reason, or Bernardi utter a joke in reply, the carriage stopped, and the Signor was obliged to hurry to the door to receive his guests. Ernest’s heart beat quick; the moment was come; she was arrived; she, who might rule all the happiness of his future life. How should he meet her? perhaps her sensitive nature would shrink with horror from a stranger; how should he overcome her diffidence? Lost in these musings, his limbs trembled, and a film overspread his eyes as the door opened, and Veroni entered, leading in, not a child, such as had formed the subject of the Signora’s calculations, or a soft, pensive beauty, such as had been pictured by Ernest, but a tall, fine, womanly girl, with a form as graceful as that of an antelope, and an eye of fire, which spoke impatience of controul. The Signora looked aghast, and the fairy visions in which she had been indulging, fell like an infant’s house of cards, for she saw at one glance that Agnes would be no patient net-embroideress, and she trembled lest she should become a rival. Nay, for a moment, a dark suspicion

crossed her mind, that Bernardi's story respecting Veroni was a fiction, and that Agnes was in fact, a mistress in disguise.

These feelings gave such an awkwardness to the Signora's manner of greeting her young guest, that Agnes could scarcely restrain a smile; whilst Bernardi, who saw his wife's embarrassment, could not divine its cause.

"My dear," said he, "what can be the matter with you? you don't seem well."

"You are always fancying something, Signor," returned the lady, indignantly; "I never do anything well in your eyes; but no one else sees any difference."

Agnes shrugged her shoulders, and the comic look which she gave Veroni, showed that she fully entered into, and enjoyed the character of her hostess. "My dear madam," said she, "I cannot imagine why the worthy Signor should think you indisposed, you seem to me health personified; a blooming Hebe in a mortal's frame."

The Signora received this *amende honorable* with a gracious smile, which however gave such

an unhebelike expression to her countenance, that even Veroni could hardly forbear laughing. He shook his head, however, at Agnes, and laid his finger on his lips, whilst her laughing eyes showed that though she understood, she disregarded his injunction. Ernest saw the whole of this bye-play with unqualified disgust. He had been disappointed in the appearance of Agnes; for, though beautiful, she was not the kind of beauty he expected. She was too gay; and, though slight, she looked too robust. This, however, was a mere point of taste, but he felt indignant at her levity; and when he was presented to her, he could scarcely controul his feelings sufficiently to behave with common politeness. Agnes saw his awkwardness, and seemed inclined to laugh at it: this completed his anger, and he rushed out of the room in a paroxysm of anger and mortification.

It is scarcely possible for any one, not a German student, to figure to himself the visionary state of mind produced by a long continuance of abstract studies. The human faculties will only bear a certain degree of cultivation, beyond

which all is vague ; and, if the attention be kept too long exclusively directed to one point, the mind, injured by the unnatural tension, becomes diseased and incapable of exercising its healthy functions. The judgment is clouded, the imagination is too strongly excited, and the reason eventually destroyed.

At that time, the doctrines of Kant, or rather those of the followers of Kant, occupied the attention of all Germany. Though the philosopher himself professed to despise metaphysics, yet as they were the tools with which he worked, many of his disciples, not having power to penetrate to his depth, went no further than to entangle themselves in those dangerous subtleties ; for studying metaphysics is something like wandering at night in a pathless wood ; it requires a strong mind, and steady nerves, to be heedless of the briars which obstruct the path, and to keep the attention firmly fixed upon the bright stars which shine above. It was as great a mistake to confound metaphysics with the philosophy of Kant, as it would have been to identify the materials of which a picture is composed, with

the work itself; yet the students were not aware of this; they seized the *palette* and brushes of their master, and fancied they had caught his spirit. Never was there a more complete delusion. Kant delighted in obscure language and abstruse ideas; his followers out-kanted Kant; imitators always copy defects rather than perfections, as they are easier to attain; and they invariably exaggerate their model. Thus the ideas of the Kantites (generally speaking), became so sublime as to be quite unintelligible, not only to others, but themselves; their notions of right and wrong grew confused; their eloquence degenerated into nonsense, and as they were intoxicated with fine words, which meant nothing, their language and actions became like those of persons labouring under delirium.

There was one doctrine of Kant which was particularly subject to misapplication. This was, that actions should be estimated only by their motives, not by their success. A very little variation led to the dangerous dogma, that the means, be they what they might, were justified by the end which was in view; or, in other

words, that it was sometimes meritorious to do evil in order to produce good:—a principle which saps the very foundation of morality, as it makes a man's own feelings the sole directors of his conduct, and how few are there who are capable of judging in their own cause. Fatal consequences have ensued from this delusion. Poor Kotzebue was one, but by no means its only, victim. Sandt was not a wicked man; nay, more, his intentions were good; but he was bewildered by sophistry, and he mistook the violence of his passions for a divine impulse. The idea of sacrificing the opinion of the world, and appearing bad when influenced by the most sublime virtue, has something in its very extravagance, peculiarly attractive to persons of a noble and generous disposition; for such characters, in order to show their scorn for all sordid considerations, seek eagerly for opportunities to manifest their self abandonment and self-devotion. Their virtue is too fervent to be satisfied with remaining passive, and they have an exuberance of energy, which, if not employed, preys upon itself.

This state of feeling had spread through all the universities of Germany. The dam of prejudice had been broken down, and human intellect, emancipated from restraint, resembled a vast river flowing over a plain in which no channels had as yet been cut to receive it. The stream might in the end fertilize the soil, but its influx had swept every thing before it. Much that was valuable had been entirely destroyed, and though some treasures still floated on the surface, they had no longer any stable foundation, but were blown about at the mercy of every wind.

Latterly a political tone had been given to the mysticism of the students, and visions of Utopian kingdoms had been raised before their eyes. They were taught, that a state of regeneration was fast approaching, when all mankind were to be good, and to be happy. They were to be free, for they were to have acquired such a pitch of perfection that no laws would be required to restrain them; and they were to have no religion, for the abstract love of virtue was to be sufficient to prevent them from ever doing any thing wrong!

It was a grand feature in their doctrines, that noble spirits were not to be influenced either by the fear of punishment or the hope of reward; and that they were to do good solely from this abstract love of virtue, which was to be the guide of all their actions. All self-gratifications were pronounced criminal; if a man took pleasure in charity, he had no merit in bestowing alms; and if he was naturally brave, he deserved no praise for doing his duty as a soldier, as he ought to have given and fought only for the abstract love of virtue, and not for the gratification of his own mind. What this abstract love of virtue really was, however, it would have puzzled the philosophers to define, but as it made an euphonous phrase, it consequently did very well to talk about; and the students were not so unreasonable as to expect more.

CHAPTER III.

Spirit of Love ! soon thy rose-plumes wear
The weight and the sully of canker and care ;
But one bright moment is all thine own,
The one ere thy visible presence is known !

L. E. L.

WHEN Ernest had so abruptly rushed from the presence of Agnes, he almost involuntarily flew to a wood at some distance from the villa, which, from its quiet and secluded situation and romantic beauty, was generally the favourite scene of his meditations. But now his feelings were different to any with which he had before visited it; and instead of the soft dreamy kind of calm which usually pervaded his soul, he found his whole bosom convulsed with a storm of wild tumultuous passions, such as he had never before experienced. He could not analyze his own feelings; he was angry with Agnes, with

himself, and with all the world, and yet he had nothing to complain of.

“Of what consequence can it be to me,” thought he, “whether Agnes liked me or laughed at me? I do not care about the girl; only, as she really is handsome, it is provoking to find that she has no soul. Had it been otherwise, what a companion she would have been to me; and how much I should have been delighted to know, that one being, at least, was near me who could comprehend my feelings! Alas! it is but a dream that I indulge in, when I fancy that such a being exists. I am alone; an outcast from my kind; a creature with whom no living thing has sympathy!”

He had now penetrated into the thickest part of the forest, and had reached a spot of green turf, round which trees of the most varied foliage reared high their massive heads, interlacing their branches till they seemed to form a verdant temple,

“Far more vast and grand ——

Than all the vaunted labours wrought by man.”

Myrtle and orange blossoms filled the air with

perfume, the light acacia mingled with the broad-leaved fig, and the flowering palm-laurel rose beside the tall dark cypress, which, towering above the rest in gloomy grandeur, looked like a conquered chieftain lamenting in sullen dignity the downfall of his race. Ernest threw himself at the foot of this giant of the grove, but no visions floated before his fancy as of yore; he could now think only of Agnes and her provoking smile.

“She does not know me,” thought he. “She would not laugh if she knew what I am capable of. However, the day may come, when, after I have performed some splendid deeds of heroism, she shall hear the shouts of triumph that attend my footsteps, and she shall find that whole nations idolize my name. She will then repent, and perhaps sue for protection by my hand.”

He was pleased with this idea, and immediately began to picture to himself, Agnes suing at his feet in the guise of a captive princess, whilst he, generously forgiving her former conduct, determined to restore her to her throne. What

heroic deeds he was to perform to effect this ! His imagination now had full play, and the scenes he fancied, acquired all the force of reality. Tyrants trembled at his name, and whole armies fled at his approach ; whilst he, though conquering every one he encountered, treated his captives with so much nobleness and humanity, that love mingled with their fear. All his actions were founded on the most exalted virtue ; though it was virtue strained to such a pitch of extravagance, as to become folly, nay, almost vice ; and it was not till he had fancied a series of deeds, which, in the opinion of any sober-minded person, would have justified the suing out of a commission of lunacy, that he condescended to let Agnes resume her throne. Then came his most brilliant triumph. Of course she, by all the laws of chivalry, was bound to offer him her hand ; but he refused it with contempt.

“ No,” said he, aloud, “ the possession of a kingdom has no charms for me, and I would scorn even an Empress, unless she possessed a soul.”

As he thus cruelly annihilated the hopes of

the unfortunate Agnes, he chanced accidentally to raise his eyes, and saw, to his inexpressible confusion, that a tall handsome man, in a Polish dress, was standing opposite to him, gazing earnestly upon his countenance, which, of course, had varied with every different emotion that he had felt. Ernest now blushed the deepest crimson, and springing upon his feet, stood hanging down his head, and totally unable to utter a single syllable.

The stranger evidently had some difficulty to avoid laughing. "How is this," said he: "Can he, who but a few minutes since, was mowing down whole armies, now stand abashed before an unarmed man?"

Ernest did not like this raillery; however, it restored his self possession, and he replied, almost fiercely, "If my dreams were realized, my courage will not be found wanting."

"It is a pity that such an heroic youth should not be a soldier instead of a student," resumed the stranger, scrutinizing his countenance attentively.

"Oh that I were a soldier!" cried Ernest;

“not a hireling, selling his blood for paltry gold; but engaged in a cause which roused all the energy of my mind, and for which I would willingly perish both body and soul.”

“Are you in earnest?”

“Earnest! Oh God! can any one ask me such a question? I, whose faculties are always completely absorbed in the feeling of the moment. I, who cannot read, speak, or write, without being so entirely engrossed with the subject that occupies me, as to be unconscious of every thing that is passing around me. Yes; I am in earnest. Would to heaven that I were called upon to act; the world should then see that I am not a mere declaimer.”

“Are you capable of sacrificing your own interest to that of your country?”

Ernest's eyes flashed fire. This was indeed attacking him on tender ground; for all his dreams were founded on the idea that it was meritorious to make sacrifices, and according to his most uncomfortable code of morality, a good man ought to live in a state of constant misery, as his virtue compelled him to relinquish every thing that he felt inclined to. The stranger's

question accordingly went to his inmost soul, and in a firm voice he replied, emphatically, "I am."

"Then wait patiently ; for a few months will decide your fate. You know me not ; yet our destinies are inseparably connected. You are he, whom I was sent to seek. A mighty enterprise waits only for your aid ; but the moment is not yet come ; we shall soon meet again, and all shall be revealed ; till then be patient."

So saying, the stranger plunged into the thicket, and instantly disappeared. Ernest never thought of following him. He stood like one entranced, his eyes fixed upon the spot where the stranger had been, and his mind completely occupied with what had just past. Never before had his curiosity been so strongly excited, for though he had often in his day-dreams fancied himself the hero of adventures quite as wild and improbable, he had never till now, met with any thing that at all realized his fancies. The striking appearance of the stranger, and the mystery which hung over him, possessed indescribable charms for his heated imagination, and he had soon arranged a tale of infinite horror

and distress, of which the stranger was the victim, and he the avenger. Of course his new acquaintance was to be a model of the sublimest virtue, the most heroic patience, and the most unmerited suffering, and he was to be cruelly oppressed by a remorseless tyrant from whom Ernest was to deliver him. The stranger's gratitude would not fail to be unbounded ; and as he was to turn out a monarch in disguise, he could not in common decency do otherwise than present Ernest to his people as his liberator, when shouts of triumph must fill the skies, and Agnes would look upon the hero with awe, astonishment, and admiration.

"At length my hopes will be realized," cried he, aloud ; "I am destined to a high adventure. Appear again, mysterious messenger. Declare my fate, and behold me ready to fulfil it. Hence all thoughts of private aggrandizement ; no selfish motive shall sully the brightness of my fame. I am called to the combat, and I shall be ready."

As he ceased speaking, he fancied he heard a voice echo, "Be ready." He started forward,

and, looking round, thought he saw a figure gliding amongst the trees; he rushed towards the spot, but no one was there. He shouted, and the sound reverberated through the air.

“ ’Twas but an echo then,” sighed he; “ Perhaps even the stranger was a vision, and yet I could not be so entirely deceived. Oh, that he would return; but I must wait his time; and, when it comes, this proud Mademoiselle Veroni shall learn to form a truer estimate of my merits. She shall then find that though my manners may not be those of a Parisian, at least there is nothing to ridicule in my mind.”

Such, and a thousand others, yet more extravagant, had long been the daily dreams of the youthful enthusiast; and he had indulged in these fancies till his health was impaired, and his understanding seriously injured. Not that he could be considered as a maniac; for though his imagination was diseased, and the judgment appertaining to that faculty was utterly gone, his mind was perfectly healthy in all its other functions. Metaphysics had destroyed his power of distinguishing between right and wrong, by causing

him to reason from false data, not by depriving him of reason. He was like a man suffering from the yellow jaundice, he had not lost the power of seeing objects, but he saw them tinged with a colour which did not really belong to them ; and his reveries, being a kind of mental intoxication, though they stimulated, also debilitated his mind, and rendered it unfit for any profitable exertion. Like Don Quixote, he wasted his strength in attacking phantoms, and was consequently unable to contend with real enemies.

In the meantime Bernardi and Veroni had retired to the study of the former, where they were employed in discussing the perfectly unromantic subject of the amount of the sum which was to be paid for the board of Agnes, and the manner in which Bernardi was to receive it. When this was settled, Veroni yet lingered ; he seemed to have something which he still wished to communicate, yet knew not how to begin.

“ The mother of Agnes died in giving her birth,” said he, “ and the circumstance affected me so much that it was very long before I could

bear to see the child. Even now you may observe that it gives me pain to speak of her."

"I do observe it," said Bernardi, drily.

Veroni was more disconcerted than so trifling a remark seemed to warrant, and he went on, in a hurried manner: "After the death of my kind friend Count Mancini, his noble brother, the brave Rudolph, procured me a commission in his own regiment, and afterwards placed me in the household of King Joachim at Naples. The overthrow of the French Emperor involved that of his satellites; and, deprived of my situation, I plunged into commerce, which introduced me to you."

He paused; and though both felt the silence awkward, neither was inclined to break it.

"Under the peculiar circumstances of the case," resumed Veroni, after a long pause, "I do not wish my daughter to be thought a native Italian; I would rather have her supposed to be a young French girl, who has friends in Italy."

Bernardi bowed assent.

"She is a Catholic," continued Veroni.

“ She *must* continue in the same faith; and if your son does not marry her, I wish her to take the veil.”

Again Bernardi bowed. “ All this is very odd,” thought he; “ however, father Raphael will be pleased, and that is something. My wife is a Catholic,” said he, aloud, “ and her confessor is coming continually to the villa, so that the spiritual affairs of your daughter will be well attended to. He is in the other room, I will speak to him when we go back, and will put her under his care.”

“ Not for the world!” cried Veroni, in a voice which made Bernardi start. “ I mean,” continued he, more temperately, “ that a friend of mine from Paris is expected in a month or two, and as he has hitherto had the care of Agnes’ conscience, I wish him to retain it. You know,” continued he, smiling, “ that a good Catholic is not expected to confess above once or twice a year.”

“ Of course you are the best judge,” said Bernardi; “ it cannot be of the slightest importance to me.”

“ I wish her very much to marry your son,” resumed Veroni ; “ do you think it will be adviseable to give either of them a hint ? ”

“ By no means,” cried Bernardi ; “ no one is more perverse than Monsieur Cupid, and I assure you he does not like to be dictated to. If you really wish them to marry, leave them to themselves, and they will do very well. Ernest is young and romantic, and Agnes is beautiful. As long as they think that they are pleasing themselves only, they can hardly fail to fall in love ; but the moment they get a notion that they are also pleasing you and me, it will be all over, and they will most dutifully begin to hate. Leave them to themselves, I say ; Nature will be their best tutor.”

“ I believe you are right,” said Veroni, thoughtfully ; “ so do what you think best.”

They now returned to the ladies, and Veroni soon after took his leave ; parting from his daughter, however, (though he did not intend to see her again before he sailed,) with a coldness that was perfectly incomprehensible to the warm-hearted Bernardi.

“I do not know what to make of that man,” said he to his wife, when they retired for the night; “I half suspect that Agnes is not really his daughter.”

“I don’t care whether she is or not,” returned the lady, indignantly; “for, at any rate, I am sure she is a proud minx, and positively good for nothing as a housewife. Just now, when I asked her to hold a skein of silk for me, she did it so badly that it all became entangled, and I was obliged to break it into such short lengths that it will scarcely be good for anything.”

Bernardi laughed; “I told you,” said he, “that you would find some difficulty in persuading a young lady, who pays handsomely for her board, to act as your servant.”

The Signora, highly provoked with her husband’s merriment, insinuated her suspicions, that his acquaintance with Agnes was not so recent as he pretended; and an angry dialogue ensued, which continued long after both parties had sought their respective couches.

Agnes was not long in discovering the foible of her hostess; and, in the exuberance of her

animal spirits, she delighted in tormenting her. Father Raphael was also a standing mark for her raillery. The father was exactly what is generally called a good sort of man; the literal interpretation of which negative praise is, a man of whom very little can be said either good, or bad. Father Raphael, indeed, had but one distinguishing characteristic of a rational animal; he was very inquisitive, and whenever he thought there was a secret, he never knew a moment's peace till he had discovered what it was about.

Agnes soon observed this peculiarity, and delighted in affecting mystery in every thing she said and did, in order to keep the poor father in a continual fever of anxiety. When his feelings were sufficiently excited, Agnes would pretend to make him her confidant; and there was no story too ridiculous for him to believe. He was very much annoyed at not being her religious confessor; and, as several months passed without Veroni's friend arriving at Trieste, he repeatedly offered his services; they were, however, always declined; and Father Raphael sup-

posing that some powerful reason must exist for the injunction against his agency, fretted himself incessantly to endeavour to divine the cause.

Several months indeed elapsed, during which Ernest was by no means able to analyze his own feelings respecting Agnes. He could not deny that she was beautiful ; and the enthusiasm which she displayed when she heard or read of any noble action, her fondness for poetry, and her admiration of the beauties of nature, soon convinced him that he was mistaken in supposing she had no soul ; yet her thoughtlessness, and her gaiety, and, above all, her unconquerable love of mischief, were quite at variance with his notions of feminine delicacy and perfection.

“ I wish I could understand your character,” said he to her one day, when they were sitting under the shade of the trellis-work which projected from the walls of the villa, and formed a spacious verandah nearly all round it.

Agnes laughed ; “ What unreasonable creatures you philosophers are,” said she : “ the English poet says,

‘ Most women have no character at all,’

and yet you expect to understand mine. Have not your studies taught you that it is quite impossible to comprehend a non-entity?"

"Sometimes you display a quickness of comprehension, and powers of mind which astonish me, and yet the next instant you talk such nonsense."

"*La folie est la sagesse des femmes.* What man would ever endure a woman who always talked sense? Now own the truth, don't you like me all the better for my folly?"

"How can you trifle so? It is that which astonishes me."

"There you are decidedly wrong; a wise man should be astonished at nothing; and he should always preserve that enviable statue-like state which, I suppose Horace meant, by his *Nil admirari*. There! I have quoted Latin to you I protest, and if you doubt my wisdom after that, there is no hope for you."

"How strangely you mix up things quite distinct. I intended, this evening, to give you some ideas on the general theory of mind; and to ex-

plain to you, the difference which exists between moral and physical nature."

"But why not enjoy nature, when she thus displays herself to us in all her beauty, without entering into dry disquisitions to inquire the reason why we are charmed with her. Look at the creeping plants, which spread in wild luxuriance, from pillar to pillar of this verandah, like a verdant network. How beautiful are their varied tints, and how delicious their rich fragrance! Can any thing be more lovely than this prospect? There lies the town, and beyond, the waveless Adriatic, 'a liquid mirror in a verdant frame;' and then, this balmy air which sweeps by, is redolent of sweetness. Oh! when we feel such pleasure, why should we coldly seek to analyze the cause of our emotions?"

Her cheeks glowed, and her eyes sparkled as she spoke; while Ernest, as he gazed on her beautiful lips, and pearly teeth, quite forgot the arguments with which he had intended to oppose her opinions.

"Come, I will sing to you," continued she, smiling; "singing is better than reasoning," and

taking her guitar, she commenced a lively French air, which she soon changed to a more pathetic Italian one, and Ernest listened, till his whole soul felt "lapt in Elysium." She ceased, and the philosopher, quite provoked at the power she exercised over him, puzzled himself to discover the cause. "She does not convince me, and yet I cannot answer her," thought he: "What can be the reason?" He was quite bewildered, and the longer he considered the subject, the less able he felt to solve the difficulty. He was, at length, roused from his meditations by a loud laugh; and looking up, he found, that while he had been sitting silent, Agnes had drawn a caricature of him, in the character of the crying philosopher. The likeness was admirably preserved; but it was of that provoking kind, which no original could feel flattered to own, and yet no one could mistake. Ernest was positively angry, and Agnes ran away, singing the refrain of a song in "*Le petit chaperon rouge* ; "

"Dansez, dansez, jeunes compagnons, &c."

"She certainly has no soul," said Ernest, "and I am a fool for wasting my time in talk-

ing to her. I never will speak to her again: I won't even think of her."

Ernest sat down in pursuance of this wise resolution, and took up a volume of essays on Moral Philosophy, but he could not read; the form of Agnes flitted over the page, and that horrible "*dansez, dansez*," rung in his ears. "She is so frivolous," said he, "I have no patience with her," and again he turned to his book; but though his eyes wandered over the same page several times, not a single idea was conveyed to his mind. He threw the volume down in despair, and endeavoured to meditate, but it was equally in vain; the light, playful form of Agnes, her laughing eyes, and animated countenance were the only things he could think of; and, for the first time in his life, he felt delighted at the approach of his father, accompanied by three or four of the substantial burghers of the town.

"Oh, my dear Ernest," said Bernardi, "these gentlemen bring frightful news. The Carbonari have made a dreadful massacre at Palermo;

they are now sailing up the Adriatic, and it is supposed, that they intend to attack Trieste."

"Supposed! it is certain," said Signor Albert, who was a man of worship among his compeers, "I tell you the fact is certain; and I propose, that we immediately remove our wealth and families to Laybach."

"God forbid!" said Ernest, energetically; "Shall we desert the town that has fostered us when in her extremest need? Shall children fly from their defenceless mother, and leave her to be the prey of spoilers? No, let us rather rally round her walls, and repair their breaches with our living bodies. The warriors of a city are her best ramparts; and when surrounded by them, she need fear no assault."

"You talk finely, young sir," said Albert, "but if you had gold to lose ——"

"I should take the best method to save it by defending the city, in which it was contained. If you fly from Trieste, can you fancy that your conquerors, flushed with success, will not pursue you to Laybach? Depend upon it, they will follow, as fast as you can fly; and when you

do meet them, your arm, being unnerved by the consciousness of having deserted your home, and all that ought to be dear to man, will fail; and both you and your wealth will fall an easy prey."

"You are right, Ernest, my boy," cried Bernardi, in a transport of joy; "that is exactly what I think myself, only I can't express it half so well. Egad, neighbours, you see the boy has some sense in spite of his romantic folly. I vow I could hug him. No oracle ever spoke better. Let us stay at home, and do our duty; and I warrant you, not a rascal will dare to show his nose. They are all cowards; and nothing could give them courage, but our running away. Ernest never spoke better in all his life."

The other burghers thought the same; and Albert, unable to stem the tide, was compelled to submit, though he retired, muttering divers mysterious prognostications of evil, from the rash councils of his young opposer.

CHAPTER IV.

Accursed the maid whom fate ordains in spite,
And cruel parents teach to read and write.
What need of letters? Wherefore should we spell?
Why write our names? A mark will do as well;
When with much pains this boasted learning's got,
'Tis an affront to those who have it not;
In some it causes hate, in others fear,
Instructs our foes to rail, our friends to sneer.

CHURCHILL.

ERNEST was so much displeased with Agnes' presumption in daring to laugh at him, that in spite of the look of mock penitence, which she put on, whenever he approached her, he avoided her society during several tedious days; but alas! he found that he punished himself, far more than he did her; and quite provoked at this discovery, he wandered every day into the wood, hoping to meet again the mysterious stranger. He was, however, disappointed; the stranger appeared

no more ; and he was one day returning chagrined, and melancholy, when, passing through the garden, he saw Agnes sitting alone in a bower of myrtle ; and she looked so pensive, that he could not resist the temptation of joining her. Agnes, certainly, was unusually grave ; and the scene, though lovely, was one rather fitted to induce a feeling of pensiveness than gaiety. The clear blue sky was illumined by the last rays of the setting sun ; and Trieste, the mountains, and the sea, were all shining in a flood of glory ; the air breathed a balmy softness, and the profound stillness which reigned around, was only broken by the busy hum of insects, and the murmuring of a distant fountain. Ernest looked at Agnes, and saw, with surprise, that her eyes were filled with tears ; he inquired the cause.

“ I am a mere child,” said she, “ and I really am ashamed to tell you, that a dream has occasioned my depression. I thought I saw some hideous spectres, and they frightened me.”

“ How singular !” exclaimed Ernest. “ Last night I, also, had a singular dream. I thought that I was about to marry you, and—”

“ You see one does take strange fancies into one’s head sometimes,” interrupted Agnes, with some of her usual gaiety.

Ernest continued. “ Suddenly, darkness shrouded the sky, and terrific forms danced in the air, thrusting themselves between us, and grinning in my face, with a look of infernal merriment. Mocking voices shouted in my ears, and spectres crossed and re-crossed my path incessantly, impeding my passage, every time, I attempted to approach you. With a violent effort, I broke through them, and awoke.”

“ It is a very strange coincidence,” said Agnes, thoughtfully.

“ Do then our dreams correspond ? ” asked Ernest, with the utmost eagerness.

“ Only in some respects,” returned she; “ but, if they agreed exactly, it could be of no consequence.”

“ Pardon me; it would prove the theory, which I was explaining to you, a short time since; respecting the invisible links of sympathy which spread over certain individuals, connect-

ing them in a species of a chain, which thrills through all, the instant any one is affected."

"That such a chain, or rather net, may spread over persons related, or warmly attached to each other, I can believe; but what possible tie can exist between you and me, to make sympathetic feelings thrill between us? You know," continued she, laughing, "that we do not agree in a single point. *I* like to enjoy, *you* to analyze the motives of your enjoyment; *I* generally talk nonsense, *you* speak as though every word were destined to appear in print; *I* like to laugh, *you* to reason; in short, to the best of my knowledge and belief, we do not accord in any thing."

"You laugh at my opinions," said Ernest, gravely, "without understanding them. *I* think that temporal happiness should not be the sole end of our existence. The life of the soul is perfectly distinct from that of the body, and it is the felicity of the soul that we ought alone to be anxious to secure. The influence of external objects upon the nerves, and through them upon the senses, is opposed to this desire, and it is in

proportion, to the capability we attain, of conquering the inclinations of the body, in order to give strength to those of the mind, that we are either virtuous, or happy. It is for this reason, that I like to know the sources of my happiness, before I venture to enjoy it; lest bodily feelings should mix with, and contaminate the purity of my mental ones."

"According to your ideas, then, the monks of La Trappe ought to be the happiest men in existence."

"By no means, for though ascetic devotion has, no doubt, arisen from a misapplication of this theory, there is a counteracting power in the human breast; the principle of universal justice, which God has implanted in the minds of men, to teach them to do their duty to themselves, and to each other. Man, thus learns that he is not an isolated individual, but a part of one great whole; and that society has claims upon him, which he cannot shake off, without reversing the order of his being."

"But how is he to attain happiness?"

"By endeavouring to advance towards moral

perfection; and by sacrificing not only his sensual pleasures, but also, in some degree, his mental ones."

"Ah! you are getting too profound for me."

"I mean, that a man should not perform great actions, merely that his pride and vanity may be gratified by the applauses of the world; but that he should be able to endure even its contumely, if his own heart be satisfied with the innate consciousness of virtue."

"Oh what a beautiful butterfly! Do help me to catch it," cried Agnes, eagerly, and, springing from her seat, she flew off in pursuit of the fluttering insect.

"Good Heavens!" thought Ernest, looking after her. "She leaves a discussion, which involves the happiness of the whole human race, to run after a butterfly! She is quite impracticable."

And, sighing deeply, he walked towards the house, where he arrived almost at the same instant as Agnes, who had secured her struggling captive, and now held it up to him in triumph. He did not condescend to look at it; and walked

away, with such an air of offended dignity, that Agnes laughed immoderately. When they entered the house, however, her mirth was changed into curiosity, for they found the whole establishment in a state of inexplicable commotion. The thunder of Signora Bernardi's voice, was followed by torrents of water, propelled in every possible direction, by mops and brooms. Never before had any French, German, or Italian mansion, undergone such an inundation; the very cats and dogs fled in dismay, and the rats peeped trembling from their air-holes, to discover the reason of this unwonted deluge. The mystery was soon explained; three English ladies of rank, travelling on the Continent, had been so strongly recommended to Signor Bernardi, that he thought it necessary, to beg them to make his house their home, during their stay in the neighbourhood of Trieste; and, they having accepted the offer, he sent to apprise his wife; who, like all the continental ladies, thinking the English must delight in water (probably because they are surrounded with it at home),

had immediately put her whole dwelling in a flood.

Agnes seemed very much annoyed at this intelligence, her gaiety fled, and she instantly retired to her chamber; whilst Ernest, who was naturally shy, and who had not been used to promiscuous society, felt a species of dread oppress him at the thought of a visit from travelled English ladies of rank. Both he and Agnes spoke English fluently; they had read together many English authors, and had conversed so much of that country, that Ernest had often expressed an earnest wish to see some of the natives. Yet now, that his wish seemed on the point of being gratified, it almost inspired him with terror. At that time, the English were not so numerous on the continent as at present; particularly, not in the Austrian dominions; and ladies so seldom quit their homes abroad, that the idea of three females travelling together, without any male protection (but that of servants), carried with it something of amazonian bravery, so contrary to his ideas of feminine delicacy, that

he regarded the expected strangers with abhorrence. Signora Bernardi, on the contrary, was very anxious to see them ; for, from her infancy, she had been infected with a complete Anglo-mania. Her father and mother were compelled to seek refuge in Great Britain, (from one of those impolitic persecutions of persons of their religion, which have so often disgraced the different continental governments,) when the latter was far advanced in pregnancy ; and, consequently, the Signora had actually been born in England, though her parents had quitted that country, only two months after her birth. This, however, she considered as quite immaterial, and she was not only excessively fond of telling every body that she was an Englishwoman, but she piqued herself exceedingly upon the Anglicized arrangement of her house and table.

In the meantime Bernardi escorted the three ladies and their attendants to his villa. They had travelled entirely by water, (a long sea-voyage having been recommended to Lady Trevallion, who fancied herself delicate,) and they were now enthusiastic in their admiration of all they saw

on land. Every place, indeed, appears to advantage to eyes which have been long confined to the monotony of the sea; for when the eye is weary with the vast plains of ocean, even trees and houses give the idea of an earthly paradise.

“How delightful it is to breathe the soft, pure air of the Adriatic,” said Lady Trevallion (*qui faisait la belle sentimentale*); “how enchanting to hear the clear, sweet accents of the melodious Italian gliding in liquid harmony from every tongue. I feared, when we passed at a distance the sunny halls of sea-girt Venice, that we abandoned the bewitching language, as well as the fertile plains of glowing Italy; and that at Trieste, only the harsh sounds of the barbarous, guttural German would strike upon our shuddering ears.”

“I am happy then to inform your ladyship,” returned Bernardi, “that we not only speak Italian, but that our houses are also built in the Italian style; so that I hope we may be so fortunate as to please your ladyship in that respect. As to our living, *that* my wife flatters herself is quite English.”

“I am very glad to hear it,” said Lady Harriet

Cranwell, the eldest sister of Lady Trevallion, a lady, who, having reached the awful age of thirty-five in a state of spinstership, now affected a bold dashing style, apparently in the desperate hope of frightening her beaux into matrimony, since she could not contrive to allure them to it.

“Have you not some curious antiquities in the neighbourhood?” asked the Hon. Miss Trevallion, the daughter of Lady Trevallion’s husband by a former wife; and who, being unfortunately very ugly, wished to be thought a *bel esprit*, (or rather a *bas bleu*,) because she had no other means of distinguishing herself.

“I—I rather believe we have,” replied Signor Bernardi, who was not one of the *cognoscenti*. “This, ladies,” continued he, as the carriage stopped, “is my humble abode. Permit me to bid you welcome.”

“’Tis a fairy palace in elysium!” exclaimed Lady Trevallion, clasping her hands together with affected enthusiasm. “How delicious! How enchanting! ’Tis Alcina’s bower amidst a grove of sweets.”

“*Dove sono le donne?*” asked Bernardi, of

the man who appeared to assist the ladies to alight; for as he had often heard of the predilection of English ladies for female attendants, he fancied they would want them, even to be helped out of a carriage.

“*Le donne stanno intorno della padrona,*” returned the man; “*ella vada darle qualche—*”

“*Zito!*” said Bernardi, hastily stopping him.

“How soft! How full of melody is *la bella lingua Italiana*,” sighed Lady Trevallion. “‘*La padrona!*’ how exquisitely harmonious, and how much more poetical than our vulgar word mistress.”

At this moment “*la padrona*” made her appearance, surrounded by her “*donne;*” who, like all persons tutored to assume behaviour not natural to them, looked awkward and aghast, and seemed upon the point of tumbling over each other, or running against the guests, in their extreme eagerness to do every thing *comme il faut*.

“You are welcome, mi ladies,” said the Signora, exerting herself to speak English, though the effort actually almost threw her into a fever;

“and I vill that my poor house do all that she can to make you quite agreeable.”

As she spoke, the Signora looked round with an air of triumph upon her servants; who for their parts, were perfectly awe-struck to discover what a wonderful linguist their lady had proved herself. Lady Trevallion, however, was not so much pleased as the Italian domestics, for she thought it infinitely more agreeable to talk bad Italian, than to listen to bad English: indeed, as there seems to be a pleasure in uttering jargon, which none but jargonists know, it certainly was not polite in the Signora to usurp the privilege of her guests, and to compel them to speak intelligibly against their will. The Hon. Miss Trevallion was not so quiescent as her lady mother, it would have been high treason against the laws of blueism, to speak a language which she perfectly understood; so she answered the Signora, in Italian so sublime, as to create a doubt in that lady's mind, as to what language, her guest could possibly be speaking.

As the villa, from the indefatigable exertions of the Signora and her maids, was still like the

wreck of a ship *entre deux eaux*, the English ladies had some difficulty to pilot their way, to the chambers allotted for them, particularly as the Signora, in the true spirit of managing, had shown her anxiety to make her guests comfortable, by removing every article of furniture from its proper place. At length they effected a passage, and did not again make their appearance, till having arranged their toilettes, they descended to the dining-room.

Lady Trevallion was a pale, languid-looking beauty, with languishing blue eyes, and reddish hair, which she called auburn ; but she piqued herself principally upon the delicacy of her complexion, which was, indeed, fair even to a fault. Lady Harriet was a tall, dashing brunette, highly rouged, and quite on a large scale ; while Miss Trevallion was decidedly plain, and of the class commonly called “dowdies.”

“What a lovely girl,” exclaimed Lady Harriet, in English, putting up her eye-glass to survey Agnes, as she entered the room ; “Who is she ?”

“My ward, Mademoiselle Veroni,” said Bernardi, in the same language, which he spoke fluently.

“Is she Italian, then? I declare I thought she had quite the air of a French woman.”

“She is French; though of Italian extraction.”

“She is quite en-charm-ing,” drawled forth Lady Trevallion.

“And who is that interesting looking youth,” continued Lady Harriet, “with his long black hair, hanging loosely on his shoulders? You will excuse my being so familiar; it is my way—”

“That is my son, a student from Gräätz.”

“I shall be happy to cultivate your acquaintance, Sir,” said Miss Trevallion, in what she called Italian. “I have heard much of the Bürgsen, of the German universities, and I have read all the German metaphysicians. Pray, Sir, what is your opinion of the doctrines of Kant?”

Before Ernest could frame any kind of answer, to this, certainly rather sweeping question; dinner was placed upon the table, and he found himself seated between Agnes and Miss Tre-

vallion. Agnes scarcely spoke, and she looked grave ; but the latter lady almost deafened him, by asking in a kind of *lingua franca*, formed from the English, French, Italian, and German, a few such light and trifling questions as the following : “ Do you believe in Newton’s doctrine of gravitation ? Do you think they will ever be able to discover the longitude ? What is your theory respecting the formation of the earth ; and do you really believe in the possibility of a future state ? ”

As the language she spoke, was not very intelligible, Ernest had some difficulty in making out what she meant, and his whole attention was occupied in trying to understand her ; whilst his father was as completely engrossed by Lady Trevallion.

Her ladyship in early youth, from the delicacy of her complexion, and the sylph-like lightness of her figure, had attracted the attention of a man at least forty years older than herself. He was rich ; she, though well descended, poor, and nothing could be more common-place than the *denouement* of the story :

they were married: and in process of time, the lady (to her great joy) became a widow, with a handsome jointure. She was now determined to indemnify herself for the sacrifice she had made, by tormenting every one who was so unfortunate as to fall in her way; and for this purpose, she affected the utmost softness and gentleness of manner; while though she was never known to perform a favour, so as to confer any real obligation on the *obligée*; yet as she was never known positively to refuse one, she was generally considered a most delightful woman. Indeed her manners were so kind and gracious, and her flatteries so bewitching, that the greater part of those she associated with, were content to take her paper currency instead of gold; and it was only, when they had been silly enough to place dependance, upon her unbounded offers of service, that they found themselves deceived. Her present hosts, who had not penetration enough to see beneath the surface, of course, thought her delightful; and her compliments to them were so prettily expressed; that whether they were couched in broken Italian,

or elegant English, they were most favourably received.

The attention of both Ernest and his father was thus completely occupied; they never noticed the dishes on the table, till they were compelled to remark them, by an exclamation, almost of horror, from Lady Harriet.

The Signora Bernardi had laboured most industriously, to make her entertainment quite English; and she had succeeded about as well in her attempt, as the doctor, who tried to give a Roman feast to Peregrine Pickle. At the head of the table, was a huge calve's head, boiled exactly as it was taken from the animal; its great ghastly eyes looking like scalded goosberries, and its hair, which still adhered in patches, more disgusting than can be described. On one side (unstripped of any of their supernumerary leaves) were some cabbages, which had been just dipped in hot water, and then placed round a large piece of underdone, half-salted pork, which the Signora flattered herself was bacon. As a pendant to this elegant dish, were some nondescripts; which the hostess called "bigsticks

de mouton," and which certainly well merited their cognomen in one respect; as they bore a marvelous resemblance to sticks, both in hardness and insipidity. At the bottom, was an immense piece of boiling beef, which had been put down to the fire to be roasted; but taken up again, before it was quite warmed through, lest it should displease the English palate by being over done. The pride, however, of the Signora's table, was a heterogeneous mass in the centre, ycleped a "plum pudding;" but which, having been boiled without a cloth, looked like one of the porridge-pots of furmity, which we are told were the fashionable dishes at court, in "Good King Arthur's Golden Days." The liquors harmonized well with the more substantial part of the entertainment; for they consisted of a strange compound, christened for courtesy "beer," and some execrable cider.

The consternation of the English ladies at this extraordinary repast, may be much easier conceived than described. The "big sticks de mouton," formed the only dish that could tempt

even the most ravenous appetite ; and of these, there were not half a dozen. The good-humoured Signor Bernardi, whose tenderest part was his stomach, looked around him in dismay : Ernest was more annoyed than he liked to acknowledge ; father Raphael, who had been invited to do honour to the repast, began muttering incantations to drive away the evil spirits, that he fancied had bewitched it ; even Agnes felt hungry and disappointed ; and Miss Trevallion looked bluer than ever : in fact, and all sat in silent amazement, till Lady Harriet burst into a violent fit of laughter. Her example was contagious, and all joined, save the discomfited Signora ; who turned from one to the other, horror-struck to find the elegant manner, in which she had endeavoured to please the taste of her guests, so ill appreciated.

“ *Mia cara moglie,*” said Bernardi, wiping his eyes, as soon as he recovered breath to speak, “ Do not look so distressed. I am sure our guests will give full credit to the excellence of your intentions ; but you have fallen into an error which is only too common ; you have

spoiled every thing, in attempting to do too much. In future, we will have plain Italian fare, and we will not attempt to imitate, what we do not understand. Let this horrible medley be taken away, and something served that we can eat."

Some macaroni and soup had been luckily dressed for the servants, whose Anglomanic taste was not so furious as that of their mistress; and that was now placed before the *mal vivants*, some of whose sins, it may be hoped, were expiated by the severity of their involuntary fast.

CHAPTER V.

Make not to dangerous wit a vain pretence ;
But wisely rest content with modest sense ;
For wit, like wine, intoxicates the brain,
Too strong for feeble woman to sustain.
Of those who claim it—more than half have none,
And half of those who have it are undone.

LYTTLETON.

THE hurry and bustle occasioned by the arrival of the strangers, had formed such a contrast to the usual quiet at the villa, that, when Ernest retired for the night, he found his thoughts too confused to sleep, and after several hours of feverish restlessness, he arose and opened his window. The moon was shining in all her splendour, and her soft light gave such a delicate and transparent green to the trees, that Ernest felt tempted to walk out amongst them. His bed-room was on the ground floor, and not wishing to disturb the family, he sprang

lightly from his window upon the green lawn which spread beneath. Nothing could be more beautiful than the scene. In the southern parts of Europe, the moon shines with a clearness and brilliancy, hardly conceivable to those who have never seen her but in England; and the shadows in the landscape seemed veiled with a light greyish kind of vapour, which gives indescribable softness and harmony to the whole. Ernest felt the tranquillizing effect of the hour, and the turbulence of his spirits were soothed to repose, as he watched the waters of the fountain dancing in the moon-beams, and listened to its gentle murmuring. Suddenly, he thought that he heard the sound of human voices, mingling with the gurgling of the water; he listened, and soon, distinctly heard whispers in a little copse adjoining the garden. Ideas of robbers, banditti, and carbonari, instantly flashed across his mind; and he crept cautiously to a spot, from whence, sheltered by a large acacia, he could see the speakers, yet be himself unseen.

The objects of his suspicion did not keep him long in suspense; but as they advanced,

and he distinctly saw their features in the bright moon-light, what language can express his consternation and surprize, to find that the interlocutors were Agnes and Veroni; at first, Ernest could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses, and he almost fancied that the figures he saw, were only one of his customary visions, but they soon advanced so near, that he could distinguish what they said, and the first words he caught filled him with dismay. They were uttered by Agnes.

“ I think them all very odd, but though I certainly like Ernest best, I could never make up my mind to marry him. His character wants strength. He is too visionary; in fact, I think him half mad.”

“ Nonsense ! you do him injustice.”

“ Only hear; it is but a few days since, that he took it into his head to talk politics to the two Signore, Albert and Bernardi; interrupting the former lady, in an attempt à *faire crever son amie*, by the description of an English carpet just arrived by one of her husband's vessels; and

breaking one of the other's most valuable vases, by the energy of his declamation."

"That was not a proof of his sanity, certainly."

"Oh, that is nothing compared to some of his *gaucheries*. Whenever he comes into the room, I tremble for the Signora's china; then, sometimes, he sits absorbed in meditation; and when any one speaks, he starts up, so (throwing herself into an attitude), and after staring round, as wildly, as an escaped lunatic, he begins to declaim on the moral and physical rights of man, though perhaps the question put to him, was only to ask if he would like a little soup, or some maccaroni."

Veroni laughed. "You must curb your tongue, Agnes," said he, "or you will never get a husband. But to return to the subject of your alarm. I do not think the visit of the English ladies of the least consequence to our friend, and wish" — Here, his words became inaudible from the distance; but Ernest had heard quite enough to afford him food for meditation. At first, rage was his only feeling; and in his eagerness for re-

venge he determined to inform the government of the presence of Veroni, as he did not doubt that he had some political motive for concealment. "And then, Mademoiselle Veroni shall find that I am not either so mad or so abstracted as she imagines," thought he. The next instant, however, he pictured her to himself overwhelmed with grief at the danger of her father, her fine eyes swimming in tears, and her expressive features convulsed with agony. "I should be sorry to act rashly," thought Ernest. "I will tell her what I have seen, and be guided by her manner as to what course I shall pursue afterwards; or, what will be better, I will act so nobly towards her, that she shall be compelled to admire me, and that *will* be revenge. I was certain that she did not know me, and I find that I did not know her. The gaiety of her manner has been only a cloak assumed to hide the thoughts that lurked beneath. I have done her injustice."

Ernest adored mystery, and Agnes rose rapidly in his estimation as soon as he found she was entrusted with a secret. His active imagination immediately pictured her as an injured

heiress whom Veroni was plotting to restore to her property, but who, not being able to effect his purpose, was obliged to implore the aid of Ernest. He was of course successful; and when the hand of Agnes was offered as his reward, he refused it with dignity, upbraiding her at the same time with her previous want of penetration. Having thus punished the insensible Agnes, Ernest returned to his chamber, and soon fell asleep; but still in dreams he was haunted with the visions of the day, and he awoke feverish and unrefreshed. It was late, and dressing hastily, he hurried to the usual sitting-room, where he found the whole party assembled, and partaking of an English breakfast. No one could possibly look less like a mysterious heroine than Agnes. She was in high spirits, talking to the English ladies, and quizzing father Raphael and the Signora, who, however, seemed to have forgotten her late disgrace, in the pleasures she experienced from the gracious manners of Lady Trevallion. That lady was the queen of promises, and she possessed a peculiar kind of tact, which made her

instinctively, as it were, fix upon the things which her hearers most desired. It had always occasioned great annoyance to the Signora Bernardi, that her husband had a carriage at his command, though she had not. The good-natured Signor had offered to keep two, in order to obviate the difficulty; but this his wife's avarice could not submit to, and as her pride would not permit her to walk, she rarely left the villa. Lady Trevallion had a handsome English brouche, and as she readily promised that it should be every day and hour, during her stay, at the service of her new friend, the Signora's eyes brightened with joy; she would have accepted the offer, and set off for Trieste immediately, but unfortunately Lady Trevallion had promised that morning, to take her daughter-in-law to visit some antiquities in the neighbourhood; she was, however, so sorry, any day but that she would be delighted, enchanted, &c.

The Signora thought it was unfortunate; but as Miss Trevallion had done nothing but talk of these antiquities since her arrival, she owned her prior claim, and could not blame Lady Treval-

lion for preferring her daughter-in-law to a stranger. She did, however, hope, that as there were only three ladies, and as the carriage would hold four persons, she might be invited to join the party. No such thing: Lady Trevallion declared she would have found the company of her hostess make the journey appear a tour in Elysium; but, unfortunately, her own health was so delicate, that she dared not travel without her Abigail, and the poor girl had caught such a cold from the dampness of the Signora's house the preceding evening, that it would be inhuman to put her on the box. Her ladyship was quite distressed, perfectly unhappy; but another time, she should be delighted, fascinated, enchanted, &c. The Signora certainly was disappointed, but as she could not doubt the sincerity of her new friend, she could only sigh, and look forward to a happier opportunity.

Some how or other, however, two or three days passed, and yet this happy opportunity never arrived, though no one could possibly lament the circumstance more than Lady Trevallion: she indeed appeared so very much dis-

tressed, that the Signora, out of pure good-nature, forgot her own disappointment, and attempted to console her. While, though she could not conceal from herself, that it seemed odd, a lady, so absolute in all her other caprices, should have so little the command of her own equipage, yet when her ladyship appeared, her graceful manners, and honeyed tongue silenced every faint suspicion, and the Signora, like many of her sex, went on "believing still, though still deceived."

In the mean time the presence of the strangers, and the bustle into which the Signora, thought it necessary, to throw the whole household, rendered it very difficult for Ernest to obtain a private interview with Agnes, though he sought for one incessantly, from the time he overheard the conversation in the garden; till at length, when he was almost in despair, he encountered her in Bernardi's study. This was a pleasant little room, looking towards the sea, where they had been accustomed, before the arrival of the strangers, to pass their mornings in reading or conversation, whilst the worthy

proprietor of the sanctuary was in town. Agnes was reading when Ernest entered, and scarcely raising her eyes from her book, she congratulated him on his escape from Miss Trevallion.

“She is horrible,” cried Ernest, with a look of disgust. “How strange it is that women can never be learned without becoming pedantic.”

“Nevertheless the French women do contrive it,” observed Agnes.

“I do not doubt that you think so. In fact, I believe *you* think that the French of both sexes excel us in every thing.”

“In manners they do certainly.”

Ernest’s anger returned. “I will not speak to her,” thought he; “I will inform my father of what I have seen, and then he may take what measures he pleases.”

He threw himself into a chair with his back towards Agnes, and took up a book. She laughed, “There is a proof, said she; “a Frenchman would not do so.”

“I know,” said Ernest, turning passionately, “that I am the object of your ridicule; that I

am hated and abhorred by you, and that you think me mad; I heard you say so to your father the other night."

Agnes turned pale. "What can you mean?" asked she.

"I heard you in the garden, speaking to your father."

Agnes' lip quivered: "We are in your power then," said she, faintly; "will you betray us?"

"No, by Heaven I will not!" exclaimed Ernest, thrown off his guard by her manner; "only tell me how to serve you, and I will be your slave."

Agnes smiled: "Notwithstanding all my offences? You are really very generous."

"Do not laugh at me. I cannot bear your ridicule."

"I am very sorry that it has power to annoy you;" said Agnes, gravely; "I fear you think too much of the opinions of others, for your own happiness."

Ernest was inexpressibly mortified at her manner. "You do not know me," said he, vehemently; "you do not penetrate beneath the

surface ; if you could read my heart, you would find that the manners, which so disgust you, are no part of me."

"I am perfectly aware that good manners are only habits of society ;" said Agnes ; " and that they cannot be acquired without intercourse with the world —"

" And is it for what you acknowledge to be so transient, and so worthless that I am despised ? We do not dislike a man because his language is different from our own. We feel no shame in having been born in different countries, or being clothed in different garments."

" Hush ! hush ! my dear philosopher. If you knew more of the world, you would use different arguments, for every thing you now say, tells against you. We *do* very often estimate people entirely by their clothes ; and we laugh even at deep passion, when it is uttered in broken language."

" I beg your pardon, Mademoiselle Veroni, for having intruded on your time ; I fear that I have been too officious ; I find you were right, and that we *have* no point of union. We have

been differently educated, and we have no thoughts in common."

"We have indeed been differently educated," returned Agnes, sighing; "and we do not quite understand each other; yet I trust that we have many points in common. We both love virtue and abhor vice, and we both endeavour to do what we consider our duty. You, however, are far happier than I, for your enthusiasm makes you believe all mankind as amiable as yourself; whilst I have had a peep behind the scenes, and I am shocked at the hideous passions which form the main springs of the human heart. Circumstances have involved me in mystery, and overwhelmed me with care; but you may escape. Beware whom you trust; especially beware of sophistry. Even now you are in danger, and I long to warn you, but a solemn oath forbids me to tell you more, than that you will shortly be tempted. Heaven grant that you may resist."

"Explain—for mercy's sake explain—and tell me the nature of the danger, that threatens me."

"I cannot; I have already infringed on my

oath. Adieu ; God bless you ; for I assure you that, in spite of my gaiety, I have a heart that feels grateful for your kindness."

So saying, she left him ; whilst Ernest stood overpowered by his feelings, and astonished alike by the nature of the information which she had given, and by the emotion which she had displayed.

"She was agitated," thought he, "when she said she had infringed her oath. Why then did she infringe it ? Why should she risk so much to save me ?" The answer was pleasing to his vanity, and he pondered over it during the remainder of the day.

Before the English ladies had passed an entire week at the villa, Lady Harriet proposed their departure. Her reasons were not very difficult to be divined. There were no marrying men in the vicinity ; and a spinster verging near the *ultima Thule* of forty has no time to lose. Her companions, however, who were not in so critical a situation, showed no inclination to comply with her wishes, and poor Lady Harriet against her will was compelled to remain.

“I cannot imagine what you find so delightful in this place,” said she; “unless it be that dismal-looking knight of the woeful countenance, with his long black hair streaming over his shoulders, like a captain of banditti.”

“This balmy air,” returned Lady Treval-
lion, in a soft, affected tone; “and the sweet
fragrance of these groves of orange and myrtle.”

“But there are groves of orange and myrtle
to be met with at other places than Trieste. I
came abroad to travel, and to visit different
countries, not to be shut up in one insignificant
sea-port.”

“Excuse me, Lady Harriet,” said Miss Tre-
vallion; “Trieste is not insignificant. It was
intended by the Emperor Charles VI. to be a
station for his men of war, when he wished to
carry on a trade with the countries bordering on
the Mediterranean.”

“Vide the Edinburgh Gazetteer, or Russell’s
Modern Europe.”

“Really, Lady Harriet, you are very pro-
voking; you know nothing yourself, and you are
ill-natured to those who do.”

“ Laura, my dear,” said Lady Trevallion ; “ you surely forget yourself ; you are quite ill-bred.”

“ I did not mean to offend Lady Harriet, for I know she thinks it a compliment to be called ignorant. Indeed, you must see yourself, madam, that she often affects to be so, when she is not. It was but the other day, when I was mentioning that Laybach was supposed to be founded by Jason, on his return from Colchis, that she asked me who Jason was.”

“ *Laura, vous me casserez la tête,*” said Lady Trevallion, in a tone of asperity ; then, resuming her usual gentleness, she addressed Lady Harriet. “ I assure you it grieves me inexpressibly, my dear sister, to linger a single moment at Trieste after you have avowed a desire to quit it ; but you know, my dearest Harriet, that the *bienséances* of society must be observed. When we came, we were to remain a fortnight, and as we have received very great hospitality from the Signor Bernardi, we cannot well go sooner ; besides, though his wife is an intolerable bore,

yet as the poor woman seems to have set her heart upon taking some rides in my carriage, one would not wish to disappoint her. We should be considerate to every one; and I am sure I need not remind my dearest Harriet, whose heart is always overflowing with the milk of human kindness, that it is our duty to oblige our fellow creatures, whenever it may happen to be in our power."

Lady Harriet smiled; for as she had been behind the scenes, Lady Trevallion's set speech produced no more effect upon her mind, than a tragedy does upon those who have been present at the rehearsal.

Lady Trevallion continued. "It always gives me the greatest pain, if I cannot comply with the wishes of my friends," said she, "the instant I can divine them. In any thing else, my dear Harriet, I should be only too happy to have it in my power to oblige you. The slightest hint shall be attended to."

"You remind me," said Lady Harriet, "of a bravo, who told his victim that though the laws of honour compelled him to cut his throat,

in any thing else he should be very happy to serve him."

"I cannot think, Lady Harriet, how you can find any pleasure in travelling," remarked Miss Trevallion; "for, go where we will, you never seem to wish to see any of the lions."

"My objects are men and manners," said Lady Harriet; "I like to study human beings better than antiquities."

"I believe you," said Lady Trevallion, significantly.

Lady Harriet was piqued, and she went on rapidly; "I assure you that there is infinite amusement in studying one's fellow creatures, and I find that they may be easily arranged in classes. There is the parrot genus; people who, having no ideas of their own, are always quoting those of others. Then there is the owl genus; those who shun the light of day to pore over the darkness of antiquity; and, lastly, there is the cat kind, who gently pat their victims with their soft paws, till they find an opportunity of darting out their talons, and tearing them to pieces."

“ Our dear Harriet has so much humour,” said Lady Trevallion, “ it is quite delightful to enjoy her society. I think you must be yourself of the ape kind, my dear, for you really take off every body that approaches you. Charming as your wit is, however, you really must rein it in, or we shall be all afraid of you.”

The word “ ape ” grated ominously on Lady Harriet’s ear, but she did not reply ; and Lady Trevallion proceeded ; “ There is another reason why I wish to stay. My late husband’s cousin, the Hon. General Trevallion, will be at Trieste very shortly, and I should like to see him.”

This information had its full weight with Lady Harriet. The General was an English Catholic in the service of Austria. He was a handsome man about forty ; and, as rumour whispered that he had amassed a considerable fortune by his campaigns, Lady Harriet thought he might be a tolerable speculation for her to aim at ; at any rate he was worth waiting for.”

“ Are you sure that he is coming ? ” asked she.

“ Signor Bernardi has had a letter from him

to say so. It is something about the Carbonari that brings him. He is to suppress them, I believe."

Lady Harriet had not time to reply; for at this moment Agnes approached, and Lady Trevallion flew to meet her with apparent rapture.

"She is just the same to all the world," thought Lady Harriet; "though this poor girl is doubtless so silly as to believe her."

Agnes, however, was not so silly; for her penetration had enabled her to form a pretty just estimate of her ladyship's character, and she delighted to play off her foibles as much as those, even of the Signora herself. She now came by desire of Bernardi, (who wished to make the agreeable to his guests) to invite the whole party to visit the ruins of a Roman aqueduct in the vicinity, to which they were to be escorted by Ernest. They gladly assented, as they were glad of any change; and, as the distance was short, they agreed to walk.

"Is the place worth seeing?" asked Lady Harriet.

“ *Ca depend,*” returned Agnes, laughing :
“ but at any rate; even if *we* enjoy ourselves, we must not expect our beau to do so.”

“ And why not ? ”

“ Because he never condescends to be amused, till he has ascertained, metaphysically, whether he ought, as a philosopher, to be pleased or not ; and he never goes into raptures unless it be *selon les regles.* ”

“ You wrong me, Mademoiselle Veroni,” said Ernest, coldly ; for he was mortified to find that, from the moment of their half confidential interview in Bernardi’s study, she had avoided speaking to him in private, except on one occasion, when she had carefully ascertained how much of the conversation in the garden he had really heard. The moment she had done this she left him, and they had not met again except in company. Ernest was highly indignant at this treatment, and he now wished to show his anger by declining to converse with her, and by treating her with the most perfect indifference. She looked at him, however, with such a pro-

voking air of incredulity, that he was tempted, in spite of his resolution, to go on.

“It is true, that before I give way to inordinate enjoyment, I like to ascertain whether my pleasure be founded in reason; but this, you must allow, is the duty of every one, who even pretends to the sacred name of philosopher.”

“Then philosophers *do* sometimes enjoy inordinately? I was not aware of that.”

“It is philosophy alone which can bestow intense pleasure.”

Agnes looked her want of comprehension.

“Here are two principles,” continued Ernest, “at everlasting war with each other in the human frame—the intellectual powers, which raise man almost to an equality with angels; and the grosser earthly desires, that sink him nearly to a level with the brutes. Happy are they who can subdue the latter, and cultivate the former; for inasmuch as they are enabled to do so, do they approximate to God.”

“Pray explain yourself a little clearly, Signor. Remember that I am very stupid, and can’t understand, unless every thing is quite plain.”

“I mean that no enjoyments are real, unless they are built on stable foundations, and are supported by reason.”

“Granted; but how does this apply to the point in question?”

“For instance, I think it wrong to take pleasure in oral flattery; as the applauses of the world are of no value unless I feel that I deserve them. When I am praised, therefore, I do not allow myself to be pleased, till I am assured that those who flatter me are acquainted with the motives which have actuated my conduct, and of course are able to judge accurately of its merit. Actions are all the world can reason from, as it cannot see the inward spirit which impels them; and, as that alone is the responsible agent, it generally knows nothing of their real value. It is thus, that what often appears bad to the world, is the result of the most exalted virtue, and what seems good is only hidden vice. When sublime feelings and divine aspirations fill the soul of man, his bosom glows with a spirit not his own. A celestial fire spreads through his veins, and every nerve thrills with

rapture. What is then to him the opinion of the whole world? His judge is in his own breast. He is lifted above the mean and paltry jealousies of life. His eyes flash etherial light, and his cheeks burn with devouring transport."

"*Apropos de bottes*," said Agnes. "What has all this to do with my axiom, that it is right to amuse oneself whenever there is an opportunity?"

"You are now flying from the question as well as I, Mademoiselle Veroni. If I recollect rightly, you accused me of reasoning before I ventured to enjoy, and I was attempting to vindicate myself by proving, that all pleasures, even those which appear mental (such as love of approbation for instance), are only real inasmuch as they are built upon stable foundations."

"For my part, I am not particular. I enjoy this refreshing shade, *par exemple*, without wishing to know why I do so; nay, I think that the pleasure we feel in the contemplation of beautiful objects is an aspiration of the soul after the delights of its former existence. It longs to assimilate itself with all that resembles its divine origin."

“Do you, then, believe,” asked Ernest eagerly, “the doctrine taught by some of the Gnostics; that the bodies of men are animated by fallen angels destined to expiate their sins by sojourning in mortal forms during an appointed time, after which they will resume their original stations in heaven?”

“I believe no doctrines but those taught by our holy mother church,” returned Agnes, crossing herself.

“Is it possible,” inquired Miss Trevallion, “that a mind so enlightened as yours can be a slave to the superstitions of the Romish church?”

Agnes smiled. “I dare not presume to argue with a lady so learned in all respects as Miss Trevallion; but I have been brought up by Catholics, and I believe what I have been taught; nay more, I try to do my duty according to what I believe.”

“Would to heaven we could all say as much,” cried Lady Harriet; “but in our church, we think believing quite enough.”

“Pray let us change the subject,” said Lady Trevallion. “I hate talking of religion. Laura,

you are generally very learned, can you tell us nothing of Trieste?"

Miss Trevallion was delighted to be so called upon.

"Tregeste or Trengete," said she, "was a Roman station, in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, I believe; though I am not quite certain whether it was Claudius or Nero: however it was one of the emperors, I'm sure, and he was either a very wicked, or a very good man."

"Never mind that, my dear," said Lady Harriet, laughing; "You have informed us of a most important fact, in stating that he was an emperor, and we are not so unreasonable as to expect you to decide whether he was good or bad. Alas! we can't tell that of our contemporaries, hardly of ourselves. How, then, can we expect to know anything certain of the moral character of a man who lived 2000 years ago?"

"History tells—"

"Great fibs very often, I assure you. Remember, my dear, the fable about the picture of a man killing a lion. If emperors were historians, we might have some chance of knowing

the truth; but the chroniclers of the times being men, were, of course, possessed of human feelings, and spoke well of their patrons, and ill of their oppressors. Lord help the sovereign who had no taste for literature, for he had never the least chance of making a figure in the eyes of posterity !”

“I am sure, then, if you had been an emperor, *you* would have had no chance.”

“Not if you were my historian, my dear. *Voilà* a case in point ! But what is the matter with Lady Trevallion ? Why do you look so earnestly at that thicket, *mia bella* ?”

“Did you not see a man amongst the trees ?”

“A man ! what sort of one ?” asked Miss Trevallion.

“He was tall, handsome, and martial-looking. Ah ! there he is again !”

“O Cupid, an adventure !” cried Lady Harriet. “Venus has heard my prayers, and has sent this interesting stranger in answer to my vows.”

“He looks more like a captain of banditti than a lover,” said Miss Trevallion.

“Better and better. You really have not a particle of romance, Laura. Have you never read Schiller’s Robbers? Have you forgotten the divine Karl?”

They had now approached near enough for the man to see them. He stood for a moment, gazing on them earnestly, and a ferocious expression spreading over his fine features. Then, with a movement of impatience, he plunged into the wood.

“Bravo!” cried Lady Harriet. “Georgine himself could not have sported any thing finer than that look. Unfortunately, however, he does not seem smitten with any of us.”

“How can you joke on such a subject?” said Miss Trevallion. “He looked as if he could have eaten us. I never saw such a horrid wretch in my life.”

“I think him very handsome,” observed Lady Trevallion.

“So he is,” rejoined Lady Harriet, “and very like Mademoiselle Veroni. He has just the same noble brow, finely arched eye-brows, and

Grecian nose. They must have been both formed in the same mould, depend upon it."

"It seems a long way to these antiquities, Signor Ernest," said Lady Trevallion; "are you sure that we are right?"

"I believe so," returned Ernest, hesitatingly; for he fancied that he had recognized the mysterious stranger, in the supposed bandit, and he had become so absorbed in meditation, that he had lost his way.

"Good heavens! do you only believe?" shrieked her ladyship.

Agnes laughed. "Your ladyship must excuse him," said she; "philosophers are never expected to possess much local knowledge; for how can they be supposed to notice earthly objects, whose thoughts are always fixed upon things above; thus it is quite natural that a philosopher should prove a wretched guide; and I predict that we shall soon be quite lost in the mazes of this wood."

"It is only another adventure," cried Lady Harriet, gaily; as, after wandering some hours,

Agnes' prediction was verified, and they could neither discover the antiquities; nor (which under existing circumstances was of infinitely more consequence) the road home.

"I am tired and hungry," said Miss Trevallion.

"Fie, my dear!" continued Lady Harriet; "philosophers, male and female, ought all to be superior to such trifling inconveniences. If you want a seat, however, look—here is the trunk of a fallen tree! not sawn and felled by any common-place, mechanical method; but torn up by the roots, most probably in a thunder-storm. Can any thing be more picturesque? and then, as to food, I dare say we shall find some pig-nuts."

"How can you laugh at such a situation? But it is just like you!"

"Then I am consistent, at any rate."

"You did not care about the antiquities; you only came with us because you wanted a change."

"So far, I was wiser than you; for I have got what I wanted, which you have not."

“I am very sorry,” stammered Ernest; “I am quite ashamed.”

“Don’t trouble yourself about it, Signor,” cried Lady Harriet. “For my part, I am delighted. Two adventures in one day. I declare we are quite fortunate. We have now only to fancy that we are acting the parts of full grown babies in the wood, and it will be really enchanting.”

“Pray speak for yourself, Lady Harriet,” said Lady Trevallion. “I find our situation any thing but delightful.”

“I am surprised to hear it. I thought your ladyship admired the banditti captain, at any rate.”

“There he is again,” said Agnes.

Ernest turned, and saw with astonishment that it was really the stranger of the forest. He was now dressed in a handsome hussar uniform, and instead of shunning the party as he had done before, he advanced to meet them with an air of graciousness. As he approached, however, he contrived to make a sign of secrecy to Ernest; who in return received him as a stranger.

“Can I be of any assistance to you?” said the officer, addressing Lady Trevallion in very good English: “though nearly a stranger to this neighbourhood, I have already acquainted myself with its localities, as I have spent nearly all my time in the open air.”

“Then I presume you are an artist, Sir?” said Agnes, affecting an air of *naïveté*. “This spot abounds in picturesque landscapes.”

Ernest looked at her as she spoke, and fancied that she blushed; she certainly turned from his eye, and his interest in the stranger was instantly increased ten-fold.

In the mean time, the stranger had acknowledged Agnes’ conjecture to be correct. “I *was* a soldier,” added he; addressing the English ladies, “but now, as your sublime poet expresses it:

“Othello’s occupation is no more.”

“You say *our* poet,” observed Miss Trevallion; “How did you know us to be English?”

“I read it in your countenances,” said he; “for beauty has long marked your favoured isle as her abode.”

“Our *accent* giving some *little* help to your discernment,” remarked Lady Harriet.

“Pray, Sir,” asked Lady Trevallion, “can you direct us to Signor Bernardi’s villa?”

“I shall be most happy to conduct you thither: I know it well, as it has often formed an object of my sketches, but I can guide you there, better than describe how you are to find it, as I am unacquainted with the names of the places.”

As the stranger appeared perfectly the gentleman, and had even the *air distingué* of high birth, Lady Trevallion did not hesitate to accept this offer, nor did she refuse the arm proffered by her new acquaintance. He appeared about forty; he was tall and strikingly handsome, but there was something rather insidious in his smile, and his dark eyes and eye-brows seemed formed occasionally to express the fiercer passions. His voice, though deep, was peculiarly mellow, and modulated with the greatest niceness. Ernest looked alternately at him and at Agnes; but there was not the slightest indication to be perceived that they had ever met be-

fore; and it was no trifling mark of the defect of Ernest's moral taste, that though he suspected this to be false, he admired, instead of condemning, the perfection which Agnes showed in dissimulation. A storm was now coming on. The branches of the trees tossed to and fro like the billows of the ocean, and the wind rushed like a mighty river along the vast plains of Carniola, to fall, with the force of a roaring cataract, down the mountain behind the town, sweeping every thing before it. These land winds which infest Trieste, are nearly as tremendous as the tornadoes of the West Indies; and the hapless antiquity hunters could scarcely contrive to struggle against their fury. Agnes clung closely to Ernest, one of whose arms she held; and, as the hope, that she did not think him quite intolerable, again crossed his mind, he felt happy, notwithstanding the violence of the tempest. The storm was, however, tremendous. When they approached the sea, they saw it heaving in frightful billows, as though "the fountains of the great deep" were again broken up; flaming arrows of lightning darted

through the dark thick sky ; and howling winds, and crashing thunder mingled with the roar of the raging ocean. Not a drop of rain had yet fallen ; but nature seemed struggling with convulsive pain, and groaning to express her sufferings. No one uttered a single syllable ; for a sense of common danger pervaded the whole party, and the awe inspired by the conflicting elements made them feel far too much to speak.

At length they reached the villa, and they had scarcely entered the portico, ere the rain burst from the clouds, like the breaking of a water-spout. Common politeness forbade that the guide who had saved them from the torrent, should be himself exposed to its fury ; and Lady Trevallion felt that she could not avoid asking the stranger in.

“But,” added she, “as I am here only a guest, under what name shall I present you to my hostess ?”

“I am a Pole by birth,” returned the stranger : “and am called Palovitz ; to which add the title of Count.”

“I read high birth stamped on his features,”

thought Lady Harriet, as she stepped lightly into the hall of the villa; and nice observers might have suspected, from the expression of her countenance, that it was not quite impossible, that in process of time, she would perhaps be prevailed upon to become a Countess, if the Count should prove inclined to become a rival of the expected General.

CHAPTER VI.

Has thy heart sickened with deferred hope,
Or felt the impatient anguish of suspense?
Or hast thou tasted of the bitter cup
That disappointment's withered hands dispense?

SPENCER.

It is scarcely in the power of language to describe the feverish impatience with which Ernest listened to the common-place nothings that passed between the English ladies and the Count, whom he was provoked to find quite the polished man of the world. He was indeed one who had lived much in Courts, who knew the human heart, and who was a perfect master in the art of flattery. The latter talent is always the key to power, but there are few who know how to use it properly; for flattery, like sugar, though delightful to give a flavour, is sickening when taken to excess. The Count, however, knew

how to administer it with the utmost skill, and he contrived to make himself so generally agreeable, that he received an earnest invitation from the Signora to repeat his visit.

When the storm abated, he took his leave; and Ernest, who had waited his departure in a state nearly approaching to agony, followed him to the door.

“The time is not yet come, young man,” said the Count, waving his hand for him to retire; “when it is, you shall hear from me.”

Ernest shrank back abashed.

“This morning,” resumed the Count, “I would fain have spoken to you alone, but it was decreed otherwise; and I now find that all is for the best. You will see me soon again; till then adieu. Be secret, and glory is in store.”

So saying, he walked away, leaving Ernest in a state of rapture; for this mystery seemed to promise that his wildest dreams would be realized, and, though he knew not what he was expected to perform, he was ready to undertake any thing. When he returned to the family party, however, his joy was a little damped by

the evident depression of Agnes, whose eyes he observed filled with tears, whenever she looked at him. She did not join in any of the praises which the other ladies lavished on the Count; and she sighed deeply when she saw the deepened glow upon the cheek of Ernest, at the repetition of his name.

Bernardi did not return till evening, and when he was informed of the visit of the Polish nobleman, it appeared to excite considerable emotion in his breast; he exchanged glances with his friend Albert, who had accompanied him home, and they immediately retired to hold a private conference.

The townspeople of Trieste had lately been kept in a state of continual alarm, on account of the Carbonari; and, as Bernardi and Albert were two of the principal burghers of the place, they considered it as part of their duty to investigate every occurrence which seemed out of the usual routine; in addition to which, like most persons in similar situations, they were disposed to give as much consequence as possible to every thing that came in their way.

The violent revolutions which had lately convulsed Europe, had unsettled the minds of men, and they fancied that they longed for liberty ; though, if they had been required to define what they wanted, they might have replied, like the English radical ; who, being asked what he meant by reform, said, “ No work, and high wages.” An answer which, I suspect, fully expresses what is generally the sole feeling of a mob.

The ideas of the continental liberals, however, differed from those of the English radicals in one important respect ; for the former were all tyrants in their hearts ; and, not satisfied with mere sensual enjoyment, they panted to govern instead of serve, their most sublime notions of justice, equality, and liberty, going no further than to make them wish, that those who had been oppressed should now have an opportunity of oppressing ; and, indeed, there is always this material difference between the English, and the inhabitants of most other countries, upon occasions of popular insurrection. Under despotic monarchs, the military are constantly at hand to preserve or-

der; and the power of the government is consequently felt by all classes upon the most trivial occasions; for instance, if a man keep his hat on at a theatre, even in France, he may be dragged out by one of the gens d'armes, &c. In England, on the contrary, the government rarely interferes but in affairs of moment, where even the people feel that it is in the right. When an English mob therefore becomes riotous, it is only for some temporary grievance; and, when *that* is removed, they are quieted, for they have no vindictive feelings against their superiors to gratify, and no personal insults to revenge. The case is quite otherwise on the Continent; for, as the *canaille* there fancy that they are oppressed, and treated cruelly, the moment that they obtain power they become cruel in return.

At this period, Constitutions were all the rage; nations changed them as a lady would her gowns, and thought it equally disgraceful to be without a new one. The government of Austria was vehemently opposed to these innovations; but the King of Naples had just been temporizing with his subjects, a measure always

unwise, as men submit more readily even to tyranny than insincerity. Half measures give the discontented strength, whilst they depress the loyal. A king should either give freely, or positively refuse; for partial concessions, yielded reluctantly, naturally engender fresh hopes; and, when that passion has once taken root in the breast, it is dangerous to eradicate it. The King of Naples wished to please all parties, and of course, he satisfied none. The Sicilians rose against him, and rebellion, like a gangrene, was spreading fast through Italy to Istria.

When these circumstances are taken into consideration, it will not appear astonishing that the good burghers of Trieste were kept in a state of constant alarm. The late massacre at Palermo, and the rapid success of Pepe, had paralyzed the defenders of legitimacy; whilst the hesitation of the Emperor of Austria, who refused to act till he had consulted with his royal colleagues, gave strength to the insurgents. Most of the Carbonari (for under that generic name were ranged all the radicals of the Continent) had been too long soldiers of Napoleon,

not to be aware of the importance of decision. They had seen their master, supported principally by his own unbending will, sweep, like a mighty whirlwind, through Europe, levelling all before him ; and, as they hoped to follow in the same track, their aim was to strike a blow which might stun the Austrian government, and give them time to complete their operations ere it recovered from the shock.

The visit of Count Palovitz seemed to excite a powerful interest in the two burghers, and the two following days were spent by Bernardi entirely in town. The Count called again at the villa the second day ; and, as the family were just going to dinner, the Signora asked him to join the party. He readily complied, and exerted all his powers of fascination to make the time pass agreeably. Indeed, he told so many amusing anecdotes, and sang a variety of songs, accompanying himself on the guitar, that Ernest, as he listened, could scarcely believe him to be the same person as the stranger of the forest ; though this versatility, by increasing the mystery which hung over him, increased his

power over the Mystic's mind. He waited anxiously, in the hope that the Count would give some sign to intimate his wish to speak to him alone; but in vain, and he did not again venture to address him unsummoned.

Agnes looked at Ernest, mournfully, while he was thus intently occupied in observing the Count; and, as his eyes chanced to meet her's, he was startled with the sadness of their expression.

"Are you ill, dear Agnes?" said he.

"Perhaps Mademoiselle has taken cold," observed the Count, looking at Agnes, sternly.

"Very likely," said Lady Harriet; "I have remarked that she has not appeared well since our adventure in the forest."

"There, Mademoiselle Veroni," cried the Count, "do you hear the charge that is brought against you? What have you to say to it?"

"Simply that it is true. I did take cold in the forest, and I now feel far from well. I should make a bad heroine, for I find adventures don't agree with me."

There was nothing in this to excite attention

generally; but Ernest remarked, that Agnes could scarcely restrain her tears as she spoke.

The Count retired soon after, and Agnes, pleading a head-ache, scarcely spoke during the remainder of the evening.

Though Bernardi always carefully avoided speaking of politics to his family, it was impossible that the inhabitants of the villa should remain entirely ignorant of the fears which agitated the town; particularly, as father Raphael was their constant visitor. The worthy father, indeed, almost lived on the abundant rumours which he contrived to pick up. Never before had he reaped such an harvest, and no story was too strange to be believed; as the changes which had lately convulsed Europe were too wonderful to make any thing seem improbable. Conversations, therefore, naturally took place on the father's tales; and in these, Lady Harriet was always on the side of government, while Ernest defended liberalism; her ladyship was energetic, and Ernest enthusiastic. They were thus debating warmly upon the subject, when Bernardi arrived from the town, the day follow-

ing that of the visit of the Count. All eagerly crowded round him, and asked the news.

“Only that the Carbonari are determined to make us free against our wills,” said he.

Lady Harriet laughed. “Such,” said she, “are always the ideas of the liberals; they cannot even conceive free agency, though they talk so much about it. Force must do every thing.”

“But does not your soul kindle at the thought of liberty?” asked Ernest; “does not your mind instinctively revolt at tyranny?”

“I did not know that philosophers believed in the instinctive operation of the mind,” said Lady Harriet, drily: “I thought that they would not allow us ever to act without a cause.”

“I was wrong to use the word instinctively, with relation to the mind,” returned Ernest; “the mind always acts upon reflection, and it is only the emotions of the body that are instinctive. The man whose mind is bent upon self destruction, often finds his body shrink involuntarily from the murderous agent which his will has determined to employ.”

“Your distinctions are too subtle for me,”

said Bernardi; "I thought that the mind and body had been so intimately connected that one could not act without the other."

"They are connected," replied Ernest, "so intimately, that it is only when long abstinence and severe study have sublimized the spirit, that it is sufficiently separated from the body, to become sensible of the divine influences which continually float around it: then it is," continued the youthful enthusiast, his eyes flashing fire, and his colour rising to a deep and settled glow, "that men become elevated nearly to the rank of angels! then, they spurn the dross of this vulgar earth; they despise the opinions of the multitude; and, guided only by the glorious dictates of really exalted virtue, they act nobly, solely from the impulses of their own hearts."

A deep sigh from Agnes electrified Ernest at the end of his speech. He looked at her with astonishment.

"I think the observation that the Count made yesterday, about Mademoiselle Veroni's health, seems quite correct," said Lady Trevallion.

"The *Count* made yesterday!" reiterated

Bernardi. "What! has that Polish adventurer been here again?"

"Polish adventurer!" repeated the ladies, in different tones of astonishment.

"Nay, nay," said Bernardi, laughing, "I meant no offence; only I think he is a brave man, that's all."

"Why do you think so?" asked Agnes, anxiously.

"Is it not an act of bravery to encounter so many bright eyes?" returned Bernardi, gaily.

Agnes looked dissatisfied.

"I am afraid you don't set a proper value on your own charms," continued he; "I long to see this hero. Pray which of you has he fallen in love with?"

"I have asked him to dine with us again, the day after to-morrow," said the Signora; "and then you will be able to judge."

"The day after to-morrow! That is admirable!" cried Bernardi; "nothing can be more fortunate, for I expect an English gentleman to dine here, the day after to-morrow; a relation of Lady Trevallion's:" bowing to that lady.

“Is *he* arrived, then?” exclaimed Lady Harriet, eagerly.

“And who is this mysterious *HE*?” asked Agnes, “*si la domanda è lecita.*”

“Don’t tell her, Lady Harriet,” said Bernardi; “her curiosity deserves to be punished.”

“Perhaps,” said Ernest, “*HE* may be a lover, and then—

“The names of lovers e’er should rest
Enshrined within the faithful breast;
Like precious relics kept with care,
And never uttered but in prayer.”

“That is from Camoens,” cried Miss Trevallion. “I remember the Portuguese lines.”

“Oh! for Heaven’s sake don’t quote Portuguese!” cried Lady Trevallion, in alarm.

“Never mind, Laura,” said Lady Harriet, laughing at Miss Trevallion’s look of disappointment. “You can go and tell it to the woods, you know. By the way, perhaps, one reason that poets are so fond of the country is, because trees make such charming auditors; they never find fault, and they never interrupt, which is the perfection of a listener; for I think that a ge-

nuine poet likes silent attention (provided always that his hearers be not asleep) better than even exclamations of rapture."

"I can hardly fancy that," said Agnes; "I thought praise was the poet's food, and that it was as necessary to him, as beef and mutton to an Englishman, or theatrical amusements to a Frenchman."

"You forget that even praises interrupt, and a thorough-bred poet likes to hear no one so well as himself. You have no idea, I assure you, Mademoiselle Veroni, of the engrossing nature of authorship; a man's works are the children of his mind, and we all know how partial parents are to their offspring."

"Who does Lady Harriet say she is partial to?" asked the Signora; who, as the conversation was carried on in English, was not quite *au fait* as to all that was said.

"To herself, and her own wit," said Lady Trevallion, bitterly; "that is, if she has any."

"My dear Adela," exclaimed Lady Harriet, "I have just discovered why you indulge now and then in a few gentle, sisterly admonitions.

Ill-nature is the only thing that gives expression to your features; and, as piquancy is the soul of beauty ——”

“Your ladyship ought to be the most lovely creature in existence,” cried Agnes; “as your countenance is all animation.”

Agnes’ attempt to avert the coming storm was perfectly successful. The compliment to Lady Harriet was judicious, as that lady prided herself in her animation; and a little equally well applied flattery to Lady Trevallion, upon her skill in playing on the harp, with a prayer that the party might be favoured with some of her heavenly harmony, appeased *her* anger. After the music, however, Ernest was surprised to hear Agnes revert to the expected stranger. “She was not wont to be so curious,” thought he, and a feeling of incipient jealousy made him listen with attention.

“Is he young or old?” asked she: “handsome or ugly?”

“Old enough to appreciate beauty, yet young enough to admire it,” returned Lady Harriet; “and handsome enough to please, yet

not so much so as to make him consider it his sole attraction."

"And his name is ——"

"A secret."

Agnes looked disappointed, and after a pause Lady Harriet continued: "Come, come, I will not be ill-natured; a fellow-feeling, you know, makes one wondrous kind; and, as Signor Bernardi is gone, (frightened away, I may suppose *en passant*, by Adela's music,) I will tell you that the expected gentleman is General Trevallion."

Agnes' colour changed; she became as pale as death; she was evidently near fainting; but with a violent effort she controuled herself, and endeavoured to ask, carelessly, if the General were not in the service of Austria? Lady Harriet answered in the affirmative, and Agnes immediately left the room.

"What can be the cause of her emotion," thought Ernest; "and why should she wish to know so many particulars about a man whom she has never seen? Perhaps she *has* seen him however. It is very likely that he may have been at Paris; that cursed city has been the rendez-

vous of all the world: I can't think what could induce Veroni to place his daughter there."

Whilst Ernest was thus meditating, Bernardi hastily re-entered the room, with an open letter in his hand.

"Pray," asked he abruptly. "Where does your Polish friend reside?"

"He said he had taken lodgings in a cottage on the road to Laybach," returned the Signora.

"What reason did he assign for not living in the town?"

"A wish to enjoy the pure air and picturesque scenery."

Bernardi made some memoranda on his paper, and was going to ask more questions, when he was stopped by Lady Harriet.

"My dear Signor," cried she, affecting alarm, "you really look quite awful with that paper and pencil in your hand; you absolutely give me the idea of a grand inquisitor taking notes."

"In these times of danger, it is necessary to inquire carefully respecting strangers."

"Times of danger! I declare, Signor, you are a perfect alarmist; you remind me amazingly of

some of our English demagogues, who prove every year to demonstration, that the kingdom cannot exist another session, though it goes on and flourishes (out of pure spite, I believe,) just as well as if they had never troubled their wise heads about it."

"But things are very different on the continent to what they are in England," said Lady Trevallion; "and though you, Harriet, may make light of the subject, Signor Bernardi has terrified me almost to death."

"I wish he would make light of his mysterious paper by throwing it into the fire," rejoined Lady Harriet.

"A pun! a pun!" cried Miss Trevallion; "Lady Harriet has been guilty of a pun."

"It was not a very brilliant one though," resumed that lady; "for I am not like you, *ma chere*; I do not like to sport words unless they are accompanied by ideas. But, to return to the alarmists, they always remind me exactly of the frogs flying away from their King Log."

"It is very well for your ladyship to jest upon the subject," said Bernardi, gravely; "as it is

many ages since your happy country felt the miseries of civil war, but *we* tremble for our household gods."

"Do you, indeed," exclaimed Miss Trevallion. "Well now, that is very curious; I declare I had no idea that the Dii Penates were still worshipped any where; I thought that the feast of Bacchus, in Lombardy, had been the only rite of Paganism still practised in Southern Europe."

"I only spoke metaphorically," said Bernardi, "and meant, that both our property and lives will be in danger, if the Carbonari succeed in their designs. In these times we cannot be too careful, and Signora Bernardi was very wrong to invite a stranger."

"Aye, I thought so; you are sure to find out that every thing is wrong that I either do or say," said the lady, pettishly.

"Man and wife are one," returned Bernardi, "and it is not polite to praise oneself."

"I suppose that is the reason then," cried Lady Harriet, "that men are always finding fault with their wives; and so, what is generally

thought peevishness, turns out to be only modesty."

"The Mahometans believed that one of the curses entailed upon the descendants of Eve—" began Miss Trevallion.

"My dear Laura, pray don't inflict the whole Koran upon us," exclaimed Lady Trevallion.

"I only intended to quote one passage."

"But don't you perceive, my dear," said Lady Harriet, "that Lady Trevallion is so well aware of your inquiring mind, that she supposes you resemble the great naturalist; who, when he is asked to take fish at dinner, delivers a lecture upon ichthyology, from the whale downwards, by way of reply."

Ernest had no taste for this *badinage*, and left the room to wander in his favourite grove. It was getting dark, but there was just light enough to enable him to see the figure of Agnes flitting through the trees. He watched her earnestly, and saw her take the road to Laybach! Suddenly a ray of light darted through his mind. She was going to the Count. It was for him, then, that she was anxious; for he probably had

some reason to fear meeting the General, and she was going to warn him. Ernest recollected the look of intelligence that he had fancied passed between them when they first met; her blushes, her distress, and the rage of jealousy took possession of his breast: "I will be revenged," thought he; and, maddening with passion, he followed her steps. The night was tempestuous, and painful feelings oppressed the mind of Ernest as he rapidly followed the light figure which glided before him. "Agnes generally possesses so much self-command," thought he, "that only some powerful motive could have occasioned such agitation. It must be love?"

Fierce as the wounded war-horse, he started at the word, but he could not fly from the pain it inflicted, for the barbed arrow rankled in his heart. "Yes," thought he, "it must be so; she loves him, that is the sole key to explain the mystery;" and this idea took such forcible possession of his mind that he had great difficulty in persuading himself not to overtake and upbraid her. He soon, however, became more calm. "It is very strange," thought he, "that

I should feel so indignant with Agnes because she is in love with the Count. She neither is, nor ever can be any thing to me. She is too frivolous, too gay ; and our tempers do not accord. In fact, I find that I am not formed for the world. I *had* once pictured to myself the delights of mutual affection ; but alas ! my hopes have vanished into air. A creature, such as I could love, would be too pure for this life."

Agnes rapidly mounted the hill, and proceeded at a quick pace along the table-land which spreads from its top. From this spot there is a complete change in the landscape. Barren rocks, and abrupt precipices, usurp the place of gentle slopes and verdant valleys ; and the country now looked particularly wild and desolate, as it was only partially illumed by long stripes of lightning that occasionally streamed through the sky, leaving the succeeding darkness more intense, whilst thunder growled in the distance, and added to the gloom of the scene. Ernest closely followed his unconscious guide, and they soon reached a withered oak, which stood stretching its massy limbs wide o'er

the plain, a melancholy emblem of fallen greatness. These bare gigantic limbs, strongly relieved by the grey sky beyond, seemed to Ernest's heated imagination to resemble the arms of a fearful spectre placed there to warn him from the spot. He shuddered, and pausing, felt reluctant to advance. The next instant, however, he recovered himself, and rushed forward; but Agnes had disappeared; he looked wildly round; a voice seemed to speak in the storm, and, as the lightning flashed from side to side illuminating the barren crags and deep sunk valleys, he fancied he saw a thousand hideous forms dancing on the summits of the rock. His own long hair streamed in the blast, and, as he saw its reflection in the flashing light, he fancied himself pursued by phantoms; he rushed on, and had nearly fallen into the entrance of an old lime-pit, when he was roused by the sound of voices; he paused and listened, but his fears were not verified, for the companion of Agnes was Veroni, and not the Count!

Ashamed of again intruding on a secret interview between a father and his child, and re-

joiced to find his jealous suspicions groundless, Ernest drew back, and slowly retraced his steps to the villa, vowing in the fervour of his repentance, when they next met, to consider the Count as a bosom friend, and never to doubt Agnes again.

CHAPTER VII.

Methinks I should not thus repine,
If I had but one vow of thine ;
I could forgive inconstancy,
One moment to be loved by thee.

L. E. L.

THE following morning Ernest arose, after a sleepless night, with the appalling conviction that he was violently in love with Agnes ; and appalling indeed the thought was, to his philosophic mind ; for he more than half suspected she would laugh at him unmercifully the moment he confessed his folly. “Any thing, however, is better than suspense,” thought he ; “and the worst she can make me suffer cannot surpass what I endure by anticipation.”

Encouraged by this idea he sought Agnes, and finding her as usual in her favourite study, he desperately declared his passion. Agnes heard him coolly, and her composed demeanour

offered a strong contrast to the violent agitation of Ernest. When he had finished,

“I am not surprised at what you tell me,” said she; “to say truth, I have long expected it, for I have long seen that you loved me. Perhaps, indeed, as women are proverbially quick-sighted in these affairs, I knew of your passion before you were aware of it yourself; or, perhaps,” continued she, looking down, and blushing, “I only fancied what I wished; at any rate, I do not scruple to acknowledge that I—I feel an interest in your welfare (her voice, here, became so low as to be almost inaudible), and that—that in happier times;—but it is useless to talk thus,” continued she, evidently making a violent effort to suppress her feelings; —“this is not a moment to mention love. The political horizon is already dark with the approaching storm; and, when it comes, we may be the first to fall victims to its fury!”

“Dearest Agnes,” said Ernest, (severely mortified at her coolness,) “why sully the brightness of the present hour by gloomy anticipations of the future, which may never be realized? The

storm you speak of exists only in your own highly-excited imagination ; and, even if it were real, why must it destroy us ? ”

“ Would to Heaven that the storm did exist only in my imagination, or that we were safe from its violence ! But, alas ! I fear we shall both perish. Ernest, I will no longer conceal from you, that my father pretended to join the Greeks merely to hide his real views ; and that he is joined with the Count in projects which I fear—”

The sound of rapidly approaching footsteps made her pause ; but Ernest had already heard enough, and he determined, if possible, that he also would join in the projects of the Count. He neither knew nor cared about the nature of their designs ; all he thought of was, that by joining his fortunes to those of the father of Agnes, he should form a link that would unite her to himself ; and he felt that a prison, shared with her, was preferable to a palace without her.

Ernest had scarcely made this lover-like discovery, when the Signora entered the room, and he hastily retreated, with ample subject for

meditation. In the solitude of his own chamber, however, when he calmly reviewed what had passed, he was by no means satisfied; and he could not determine whether Agnes returned his passion or not. She was too cool, too rational; and, as he walked up and down his room, in feverish agitation, he could not help exclaiming to himself, “She has no idea of love! She has no soul! *She feels an interest in my welfare!*—How poor; how tame! Oh what would I not give that she could love as I do! But she is incapable!” The next moment, however, he repented his heresy; and, kneeling down, kissed devoutly a knot of ribbon which Agnes had worn in her hair. He recollected the day when he had become possessed of this treasure; he recalled her look, her manner; and his heart felt softened. The reminiscence was happy for Agnes’ power over his affections; for this was one of the few occasions where she had permitted her feelings to subdue her gaiety. A poor woman, the wife of one of the labourers in the salt-works at some distance from the town, had heard that her husband had been seriously in-

jured by an accidental fall, whilst carrying a heavy load; and she was hastening to the spot, with a child on each arm, when, exhausted by terror and fatigue, she fell. Agnes and Ernest were walking near the place, and seeing her distress, had flown to her assistance. With their help, she pursued her journey; and it was in the exertion of raising one of the children in her arms, to carry it for the woman, that this knot had fallen from Agnes' hair. Ernest picked it up; and he had kept it in memory of the incident. It now affected him powerfully; and, as he recalled Agnes' graceful figure, when she bent to lift the child, her fine countenance beaming with compassion,—and the tear which trembled in her eye,—he thought that even love was too cold a term to express the adoration which he felt for her!

But, though Ernest had thus proved to himself, incontestibly, that he loved Agnes, he was by no means certain that she returned his passion. She had not only shown too little emotion, but she had assumed a superiority of manner, and had delivered her sentiments in a calm,

and almost patronizing tone, which accorded ill with his ideas of a timid girl, whose whole soul is absorbed in that of her lover. Poor Ernest ! he forgot that Agnes had been educated in Paris, and that romance could not exist in that atmosphere. In spite of her youth, and her extreme thoughtlessness, Agnes was not quite ignorant of the world. She had been brought up in a French school ; and, in such places, though young ladies are taught to preserve a statue-like appearance in company till they are married, they get a little insight into the manner in which they are to be indemnified for their restraint when the awful ceremony has passed. In short, the seeds are there sown which afterwards produce such abundant fruit ; and their apparent reserve is only a thin soil, thrown loosely over the surface. Besides this, Agnes had been so long accustomed to hear of plots and stratagems — to view human nature on its worst side — to find that people are rarely what they seem, and that self-interest is generally the key to all their actions, that it was quite impossible for her to fancy any man to be a deity. She had no en-

thusiasm; that "spark of heavenly birth" had been quenched for ever by what she had seen of society; for her knowledge of the world had been acquired by practice, not by theory. The story Veroni told, of her long separation from him, was untrue, for she had accompanied him in many of his wanderings; and, as she was considered too young to be dangerous, many of the wild schemes and unlawful adventures in which he had been engaged were planned in her hearing. Agnes was too shrewd and observing not to watch attentively all that passed; and she soon found, that those who plotted together to deceive strangers, often did not hesitate to betray each other. Thus, as she fancied that all mankind resembled the specimens she had seen, she became quite disgusted with the world; and, till she came to reside at Bernardi's, she had actually no idea that any man could love virtue solely for itself. Ernest, accordingly, appeared so strange a character to her, that she almost fancied him a being of another world. At first, indeed, she supposed he was only acting a part, like the rest; but, when she found that he was

perfectly serious, and that he really believed all he said, her astonishment was extreme. This feeling, on a longer acquaintance, ripened into love; not that passionate worship which a young and ignorant girl generally feels for the man whom she considers almost as a god, but a kind of half-protecting, fond affection, like that which we usually entertain towards an innocent and interesting child.

Agnes knew that Veroni was engaged in a treasonable conspiracy, which might endanger his life; and, when he first proposed to place her in the house of Bernardi, her keen discernment readily enabled her to perceive that he intended to employ her as a tool, to effect some purpose of which she was to remain ignorant. Her pride of intellect revolted at this; and, as she was perfectly conscious of her own powers, she did not like to be treated as an automaton, and therefore resolved to know the secret.

“It is quite useless to give me lessons,” said she, when Veroni began to lecture her, as to what she was to do and say, whilst she was the inmate of Bernardi: “I am sure to forget all you tell

me; but, if you will inform me of the circumstances of the case, I will act according to the best of my discretion."

"That is, you perceive there is a secret; and, like all your sex, you will not be happy till you know what it is. Well, I will trust you. My confederates and I have a scheme for establishing a free government in Trieste. The magistrates of the town, who are in the pay of Austria, are of course hostile to this. Bernardi is their chief; and we think, if you are in his mansion, you may be able to give us warning of their designs against us."

"So, then, you destine me to the honourable office of a spy?"

"Not only that; I had also in view your future establishment, my perverse beauty! Bernardi has a son—"

"Who, through me, may be led to join you? Upon my word, I am to be made very useful; I did not think I was charming enough for a decoy!"

"Agnes! Agnes! what an opinion you have

of the world ! You see every thing on the worst side."

" Alas ! is it not your companions whose conduct has made me do so ? "

Veroni made no reply, and Agnes offered no further opposition. She was, however, indignant at both projects ; but she was powerless, and she had neither friends nor money to enable her to resist Veroni, whose will, moreover, as her father, she was bound to obey. She therefore consented to become Bernardi's inmate on the terms he wished ; mentally vowing, however, that her office of spy should be confined to the task of warning Veroni of danger ; that she would report nothing that could be detrimental to her host ; and that no considerations should induce her to exercise the slightest influence over Ernest, even if she should be so unfortunate as to attract his regard, which she devoutly hoped she might not.

Much as Agnes disliked all the companions of Veroni, she thought the rest amiable, when compared with the person whom we have called the Count. That man she particularly abhorred,

and an instinctive horror, which she could not conquer, crept over her whenever he approached. She almost fancied him a living incarnation of the evil spirit; for, wherever he came, sin and misery seemed to follow his steps. It was, therefore, with indescribable terror, that after she had been a few months at the villa, she heard him tell Veroni that he had accidentally encountered Ernest (for whom her incipient passion already made her feel a deep interest), and that he had been much struck with the enthusiasm of his character.

“You need not trouble yourself any longer about this young student,” said he to Veroni; “and your fair daughter may feel relieved from her dread of being employed as the means of drawing him into our scheme; for I will now take that task upon myself. He is already half crazy, and he fancies himself born to be a hero.”

“Admirable!” cried Veroni: “He ought, then, to feel grateful to us, for affording him the means of distinguishing himself. I thought that we should not have much trouble with him, as soon as I found he was a Mystic, and as I

heard him expatiate enthusiastically on the liberation of the Greeks."

The Count smiled. "It must be our endeavour to keep his mind in this state of delusion," said he, "till he has gone too far to recede. Bernardi is passionately fond of his son, and if the latter can be persuaded to identify his safety with our own, I have no doubt that the old man's paternal love will overcome every other feeling."

"But, even if you do gain Bernardi's co-operation," said Agnes, "I cannot fancy that you will find it really of half the importance which you seem to suppose."

"Why do you think so?"

"Bernardi can only be useful to you from his influence among the principal merchants of the town; and, as the influence which he at present enjoys has been gained solely by his high character for loyalty and integrity, it appears to me, that by making him a Carbonaro, you deprive him at once of every thing which gave him weight, or could make him serviceable."

“Bravo, my fair logician! By Mercury, Veroni, thy pretty daughter is a very goddess of eloquence; and, if the doctrine of transmigration be true, no doubt her spirit formerly animated one of the far-famed doctors of the Sorbonne!”

“Keep to thy caps and bonnets, Agnes, for the future,” said Veroni; “we will allow thee an excellent judge of lace, my child; or to have a tolerable taste as to the colour of a silk or ribbon; but affairs of state are above thy comprehension.”

“Why, then, do you force me to mingle with conspirators?” said Agnes, bitterly.

The Count’s eyes flashed fire, and he half laid his hand upon his sword; but Veroni checked him.

“Agnes is a pettish girl,” said he, “and talks about things that she does not understand. She forgets, that when we employ her, it is as a tool, not as a principal.”

Agnes’ heart swelled violently, and she could scarcely restrain her indignation. Veroni, however, prevented her from speaking. “We have no time to waste in words,” continued he;

“and we do not want unwilling agents. So I tell you plainly, Agnes, that you must either submit to go only so far, and no farther than we think proper; or that you may withdraw yourself from us altogether :—only remember, that if you betray us, you devote your father to the scaffold !”

Agnes was dreadfully agitated; her heart beat; her colour went and came, and she felt oppressed, almost to suffocation, as the hope of escaping from the tyranny which had so long oppressed her flashed across her mind. A few moments, however, turned the current of her thoughts, and she resolved to counterfeit submission, that she might hear in what manner the Count meant to assail Ernest; and that she might, if possible, guard him against the danger. She therefore sat down, and with burning cheeks, and throbbing bosom, faintly articulated, “I was wrong. Pardon me. I submit.”

“That is right,” said Veroni; “now you prove yourself to possess the sense I always gave you credit for. You may therefore remain, as we have no wish to conceal any thing

from your knowledge; and, indeed, rather prefer confiding in you than otherwise; but remember, you must not again interfere in our plans."

Agnes bowed obedience; and the Count, though he did not appear *quite* satisfied with the arrangement which made her an auditor to what he said, proceeded to discuss with Veroni his plans for seducing Ernest, and making him join the Carbonari.

"The first glance I caught of the young student," said he, "convinced me that I should find little difficulty in bringing him over to our plans. His transparent complexion, which, though constitutionally pale, flushed with every emotion that crossed his mind; the deep, liquid lustre, and almost unearthly expression of his large, dark eyes, which were first fixed so mournfully upon the ground, and then glanced rapidly around with a fire which astonished even me; and his youthful, though morbid enthusiasm combined together, assured me of success. Nature, indeed, has evidently marked him out for a victim. His own feelings, sooner or later,

must destroy him ; and, even if his life should fall a sacrifice from his joining in our plans, we shall only (perhaps by a very short time) anticipate his inevitable fate ! ”

“ I believe it,” said Veroni, “ and consequently feel little compunction for what may befall *him* ; but what Agnes has said, respecting Bernardi, appears worthy of consideration. He cannot become one of us without losing half his value.”

“ Pshaw ! ” returned the Count. “ His wealth will always give him consequence ; and, besides, the sapient burghers, like a flock of sheep, will be very likely to plunge into any thing, even into difficulties, if they see one of their own number leading the way.”

Veroni laughed ; “ I believe you are right,” said he ; “ and, that being granted, all that remains is, to find means to make Ernest our proselyte.”

“ Nothing can be more easy. He is a Mystic ; and, as such, I consider him as a fully stringed and finely tuned lute, ready to vibrate at the slightest touch, and to sound whatever notes it

may please a master-hand to call forth. Such as is the power of a musician over his instrument, will therefore be my influence over the mind of Ernest, and harmony or discord shall alike follow my bidding. I know his train of thought, and I can strike chords which shall thrill through every nerve. He adores virtue, my designs shall therefore clothe themselves in a virtuous garb; and he worships mystery, therefore will I glide before him as a spectre, appearing when he expects me not, and changing my form and manners at every new interview; till, puzzled and bewildered, he shall conceive me a being superior to himself, because he cannot understand the motives for my actions; and, of course, not finding himself able to measure them by his own standard, he must be incompetent to judge of their real worth. He will thus affix a false value upon all I say and do; and, when I have worked his mind up to a proper pitch, I will contrive, by means of an optical delusion, (which I can easily prepare,) to make himself suppose that he has seen a super-

natural being, who has declared his fate, and whose will it is impossible for him to resist."

"Excellent!" cried Veroni. "I envy you the honour of so happy an invention, and one which is so exactly calculated to accomplish the end which we have in view. Ernest is a professed idealist; and, of course, like all his very philosophical, and very unintelligible fraternity, he is a profound believer in the doctrine, that certain individuals are fated to perform certain actions, which they have no power to avoid. Indeed, I suspect that he carries his sublimity so far, as to suppose that the actions of the phantasm, or spectrum (which, by courtesy, is called his body), are so distinct from any operations of his mind, as to free the latter from all troublesome responsibility on their account.

"Mercy! mercy!" cried the Count, interrupting him, and laughing. "Consider that it will be quite enough if I become 'transcendental' with Ernest; so, at present, you must really forgive my staying to prove that 'matter is a phenomenon which has no real existence:' and you must not be so unreasonable as to expect

me either to ascend above all 'sensual ideas' and 'earthly comprehensions;' or to prove, by mathematical demonstration, that being a man, I am consequently, neither a horse, nor a tree!"

"Indeed, you have no occasion to give yourself so much trouble," said Veroni, laughing. "You, or not you, it is no matter which; though I question if Fichte himself could tell whether you are a man, or an infernal spirit."

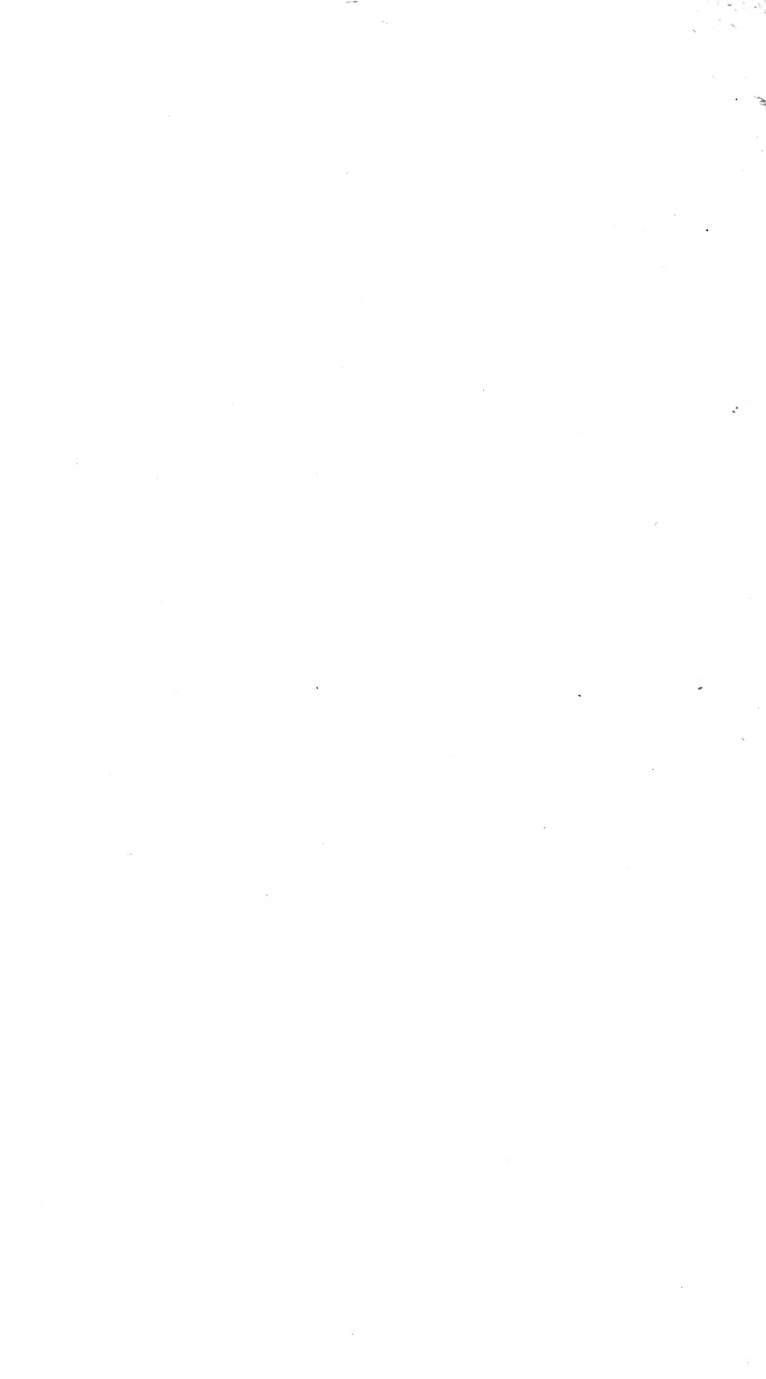
"You flatter!" said the Count, ironically; and the conversation taking another turn, they soon after separated.

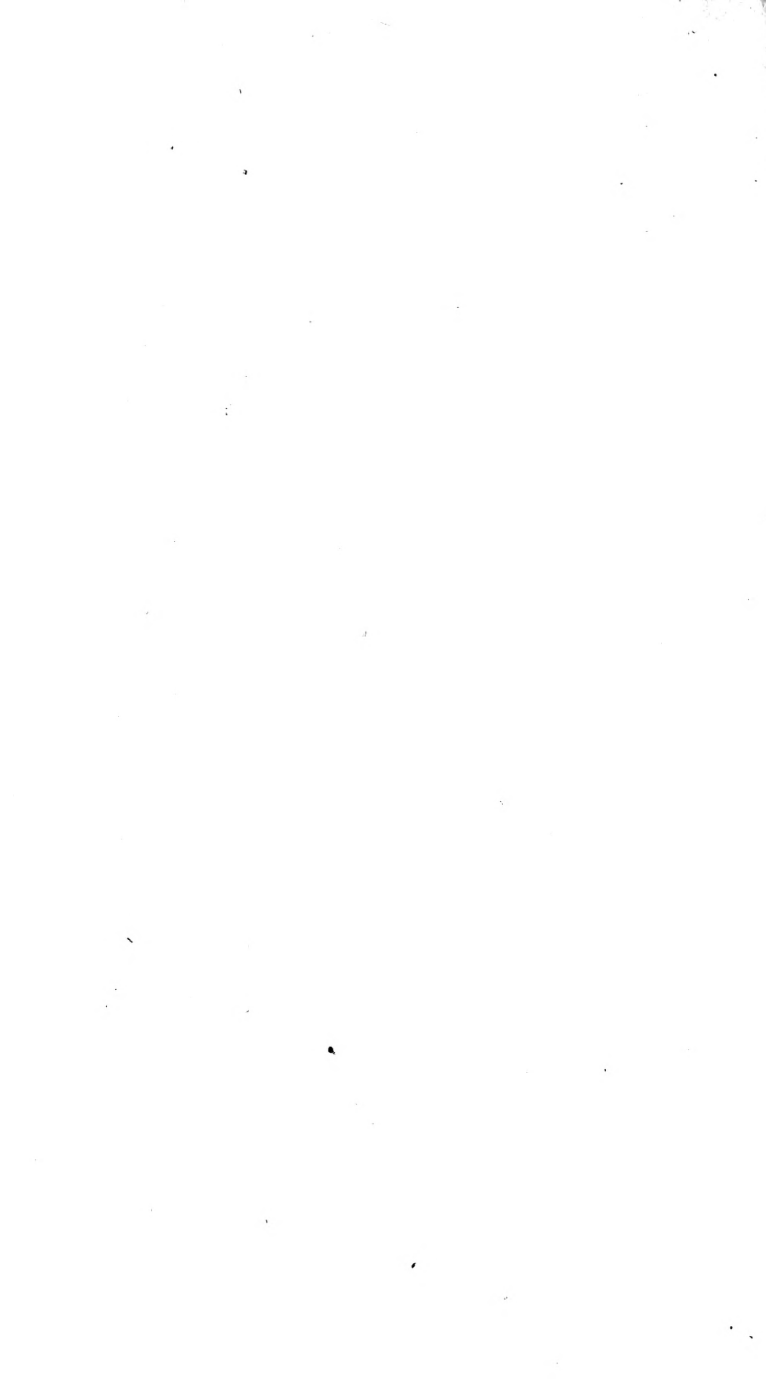
It may be imagined with what feeling Agnes listened to a plot which seemed to freeze her blood; and, when she next saw Ernest, she felt as though a demon were hovering over his head, which he could not see, and which (even if her tongue were unchained,) he would not believe in, though she were to warn him of its existence. It was this feeling that destroyed Agnes' gaiety during the visits of the Count; while it softened into tenderness the sentiment she had before begun to entertain for Ernest, since pity always smooths the path to love; and she regarded

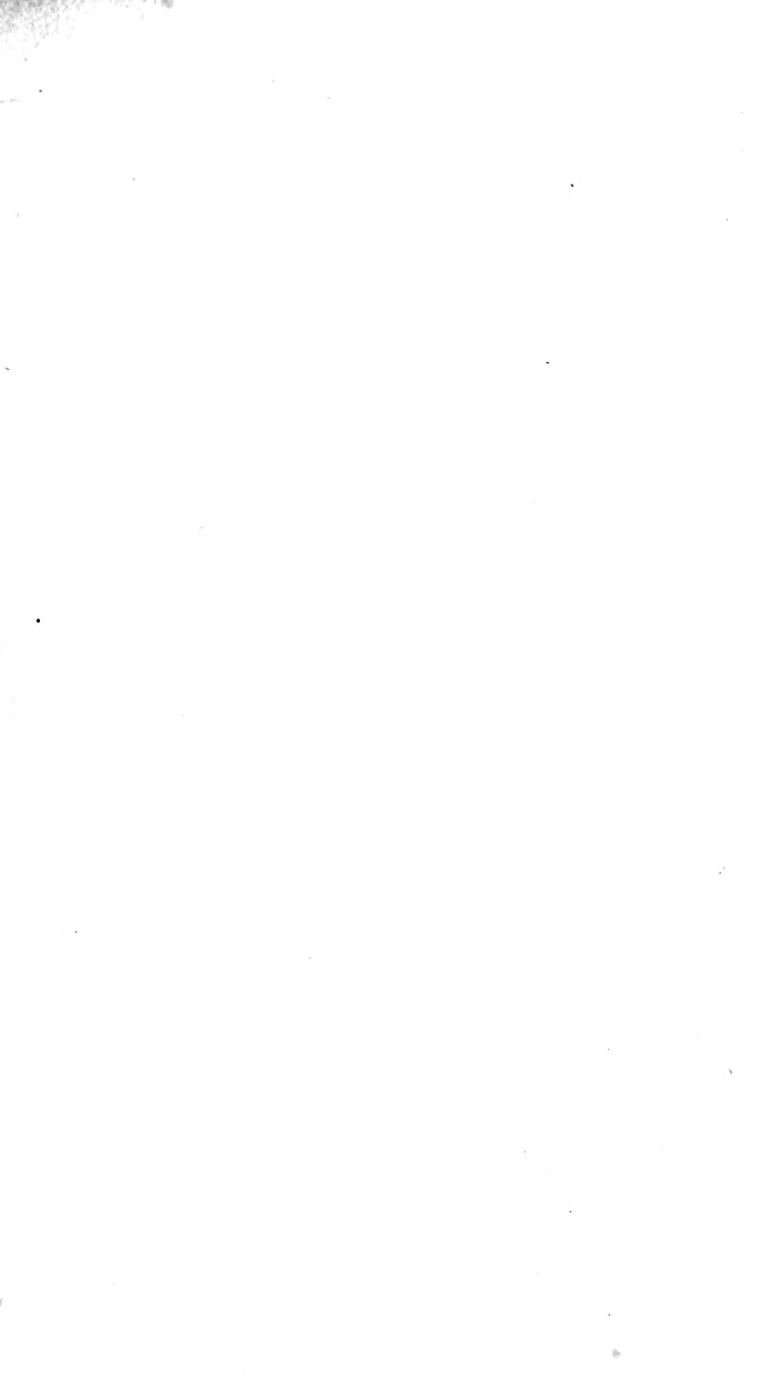
him as one treading upon the edge of a precipice, of whose danger she was fully sensible, but whom she feared all her efforts would be powerless to save. Still, however, she endeavoured to interpose between him and destruction, though she did not dare to utter more than hints; as, even if she could have forgotten the oath that bound her to the Carbonari, she knew that she could not reveal the projects of the Count without also betraying her father, and she shrank with horror from the guilt of parricide.

With such deep and contending emotions agitating her mind, it is not surprising that Agnes felt little of the absorbing power generally ascribed to love, and that her manner appeared cool to Ernest, who knew no other passion, and had suffered his whole soul to be engrossed by this. He could not in the least understand her feelings; and he perplexed himself vainly in endeavouring to find a clue to them in his own breast.

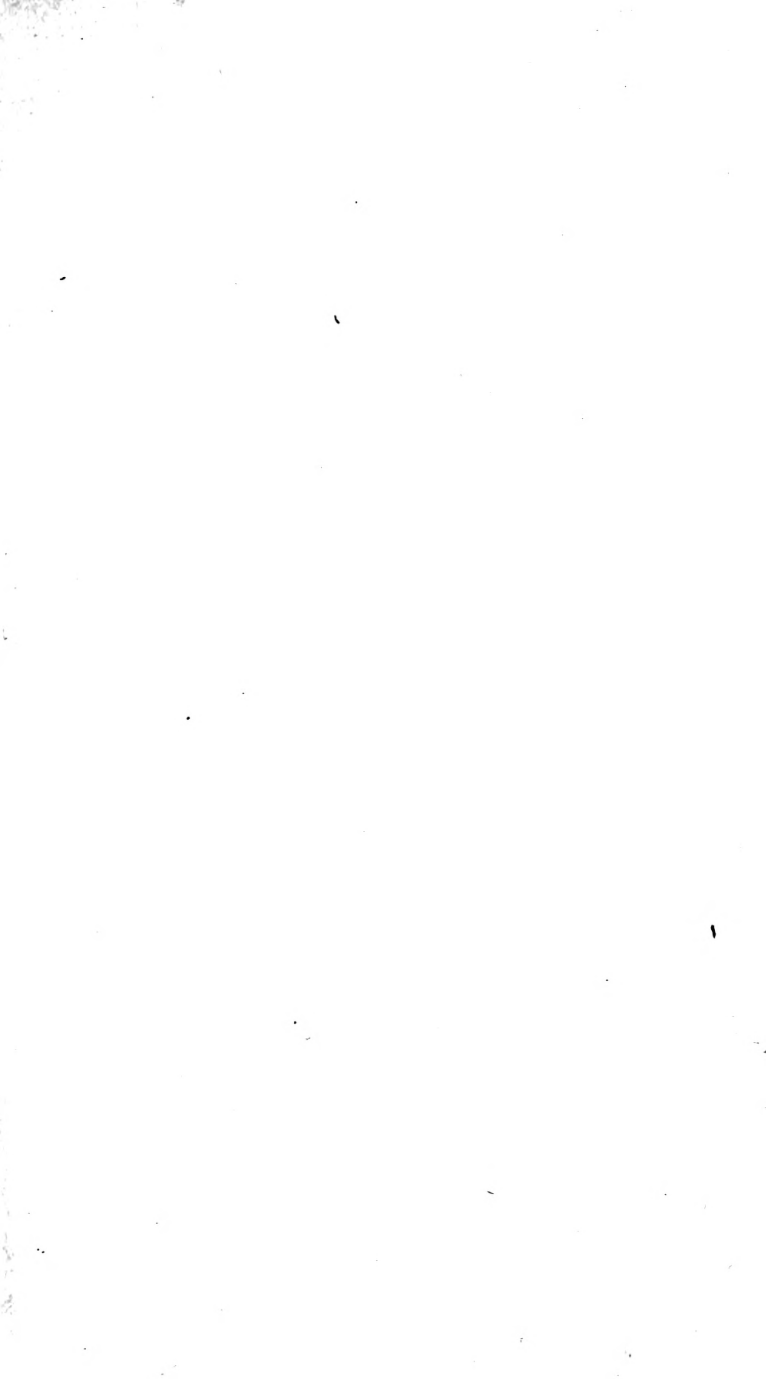
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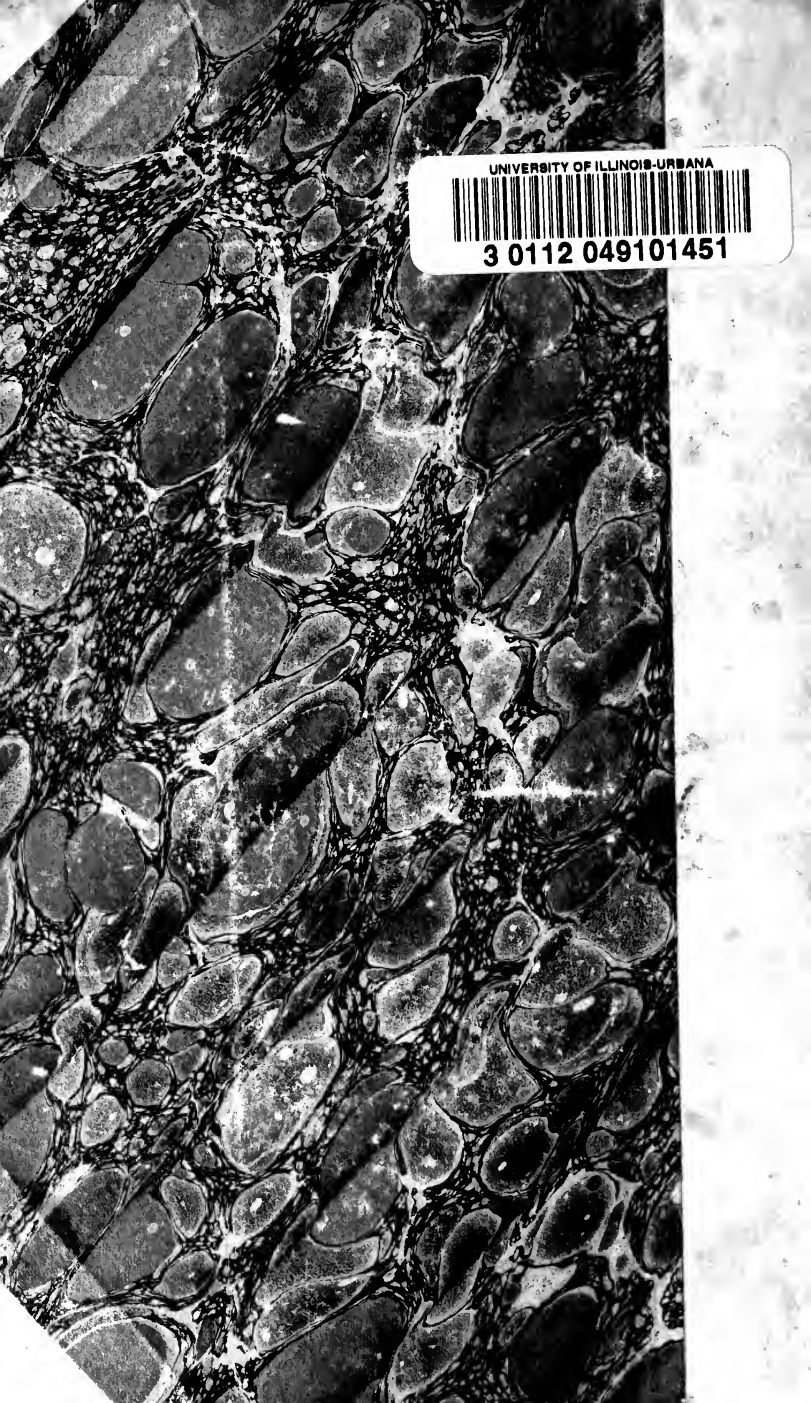












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